



SPEED CAMERAS FOR BUSY ROUTE

Report by Richard Guttridge

SPEED cameras in Dudley are set to be installed at a notorious junction on the Birmingham New Road under plans by highways bosses to crack down on dangerous driving.

Dudley Council said it was investigating putting two fixed cameras on the bend near Woodcroft Avenue, Tipton. U-turns could also be banned at the junction with Ivyhouse Lane, Cosely, and cameras installed to police it.

Councillors and residents have long called for safety measures at the Woodcroft Avenue junction. A campaign called for new traffic lights near the entrance to the street over concerns for the safety of motorists leaving the Foxyards estate. Some 600 people signed a petition in support of that suggestion.

The measures have been included in the council's Local Safety Scheme Proposed Programme for 2016/17.

Safety experts estimate the measures would decrease the likelihood of accidents on that stretch of the busy Birmingham New Road by half.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin has been vocal about the need for action on that stretch of road.

He said: "I'm delighted that the council has listened to residents and will be installing cameras to tackle speeding.

"Speeding is a real problem along the Birmingham New Road and I have been working with local councillors to press the council to sort it out."

Dudley councillor Ken Finch said: "Whether this will completely solve the problem I don't know. Birmingham New Road is a very dangerous road and a fast road.

"Residents fear there might be a fatality in the future and we are trying to prevent that.

"I've been involved for three years and have done quite a number of site visits. At least somebody is listening to us, which is a good thing."

A series of other measures aimed at improving safety on roads in the Dudley borough have also been revealed.

Mini roundabouts could be added to Gospel End Street in Sedgley and the junction of Hagley Road and Albert Road, in Hayley Green, to aid traffic flow.

The speed limit along Wynnall Lane, Lutley Lane and Foxcote Lane near Halesowen will be reduced to 40mph as the current national speed limit is deemed to be too fast for such residential areas.

It comes after Dudley Council revealed it was looking at bringing back speed cameras on some of the busiest roads in the borough. They were switched off in 2013 as they were costing too much money.

CHURCH SAVED AFTER CAMPAIGNERS KEEP FAITH



Deb Brownlee, chairman of St John's Preservation Group, inside historic Kates Hill Church, which has been saved after a 14-year campaign

"WE always knew that this day would come – I always had faith that we would see the doors open to this beautiful church again."

The words of Deb Brownlee, chairman of St John's Preservation Group, as the keys were handed over to Dudley's historical Kates Hill Church, after 14 years of campaigning.

More than 100 people gathered at the ceremonial event last week to take a look at the inside of the Grade II-listed building, which is now in need of restoration.

Mrs Brownlee said: "If I had to describe how I feel at the moment I would say fantas-

tic. But we never gave up hope of having this church open again.

"It's been a long journey with a lot of delays but we have had amazing support from everyone to get to this point. Now we need lots of volunteers and people to give up some of their time to help us do the best we can to get the church in a good condition.

"The roof of the galleries has bowed due to water and plaster is falling from parts of the ceilings and doors so now we have got to start fundraising as much as we can."

The church boasts an impressive stained

glass window, altar, pews and ornate balconies. It was closed to the public in November 2002 after it was deemed to be unsafe.

The group hopes to use the church for six Anglican services a year with plans of creating a visitor centre, cafe, gift shop and costumed guided tours.

The 2.5 acres of graveyard will also be a nature reserve with land at the side to feature trails, pools and community orchard.

The lease was completed on July 27 this year – 176 years to the day when the church was opened in 1840.

THEFT

Dismay as cadets' new minibus stolen

THIEVES have stolen a minibus Kingswinford air cadets worked for, just three weeks after it was bought.

After spending four years raising £15,000 to buy the much-needed vehicle, The Kingswinford 2488 Squadron Air Training Corps were devastated to discover that the 17-seater Ford Transit had been stolen from their headquarters behind the Standhills Road Medical Centre.

Without the bus the squadron may have to cancel activities, including taking part in parades and expedition, until they can raise funds for another bus.

POLICE

Teenager in death probe freed on bail

A FOURTH teenager who was arrested over the murder of father-of-two Simon Johnson in Netherton has been released on bail. The 18-year-old was quizzed by officers after being arrested on Tuesday last week.

Police said the teenager had been released pending further inquiries. Three others, two aged 15 and one 18 have already been released on bail.

Mr Johnson was found stabbed to death at a house in Cradley Road on August 11.

CRIME

Pensioners warned over roofing scam

FRAUDSTERS have been sending out fake flyers offering non-existent roofing subsidies for pensioners.

Dudley Council is warning residents about official looking leaflets that have been distributed across the borough. They claim that subsidies of up to 40 per cent are available to pensioners.

The con promotes 'roof coating' work as an alternative to re-roofing and claim to make roofs 'maintenance free' for up to 20 years. Similar claims have been investigated by Trading Standards and found to be fraudulent. For more information, call trading standards on (01384) 812045.

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BERT STILL AN INSPIRATION



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Three die in weekend of horror on roads



Tributes to MJ on Keats Road

A MAN and two children have died after a weekend of horror crashes in the Black Country.

A four-month-old baby girl and a three-year-old boy were among the victims as tragedy struck in three separate crashes, one of which closed the M6 until Monday morning.

In the first incident, a four-month-old girl died following a collision on the Birmingham Road in Walsall. The crash, close to The Bell pub, happened at 8.50pm on Friday. It involved a Ford Focus and a blue BMW 1 Series.

The baby, travelling in the red Ford

Focus, was pronounced dead at the scene, while several other people were taken to hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

The road was closed for several hours while emergency services and collision investigators worked to clear the area and carry out inquiries to try and establish what happened.

Sergeant Chris Ridge from the collision investigation unit, said: "A young baby has tragically died, this is devastating for her family and our thoughts remain with them at this difficult time.

"This is a busy road and we have spo-

ken to a number of witnesses but we would still like to hear from anyone who saw what happened and has not yet spoken to an officer."

On Saturday afternoon a three-year-old boy was killed after a collision with a tipper van in Wolverhampton.

The child, Matthew Junior Rowland George Maybin, known as MJ, was pronounced dead at the scene in Keats Road, The Scotlands.

On Sunday a man died after a crash between a lorry, car and van on the M6 at Walsall at around 3pm.

Students celebrating A-level results success

AS A-level students across Dudley celebrated some record results, one teenager had extra reason to jump for joy when he saw his grades.

Dudley Sixth student Kulbir Singh didn't speak English until the age of 15, having come to the UK from Italy. But the 18-year-old has scored an impressive four A*s in mathematics, chemistry, further mathematics and physics.

Kulbir, who studied a one-year ESOL course (English for Speakers of other Languages) before his A-levels, will now take up his place at Brasenose College, Oxford, to read physics.

He said: "I liked maths and physics before I came to Dudley Sixth, now I love them. My tutor's shared my passion for the subjects and really motivated me to do well. It's such a relaxed, friendly atmosphere in which to study that I always felt happy to come to college.

Ambition

"My ambition is to go on and get a first at Oxford. Dudley Sixth has helped me believe anything's possible if you work for it."

Kulbir, who lives in Smethwick, was not the only one celebrating at the college as the number of students achieving higher grades rose and 30 out of 37 subjects received a pass rate of 100 per cent.

Elsewhere in the borough, Old Swinford Hospital in Stourbridge recorded a 100 per cent pass rate across 23 subjects. High-flyers included Budd Crooks, from Worcester, who gained straight A*s, and Nat Slater, from Kingswinford, with one A* and two A grades. Both students will continue their education at the University of Bath, studying natural sciences.

Stourbridge boys Oliver Mann, who achieved straight As, and Cameron Harrison, who achieved A*,A,B, are to study in London, at the London School of Economics and Political Sci-



Dudley Sixth student Kulbir Singh, aged 18, celebrated achieving an impressive four A*s in his A-level subjects

ence and University College London respectively.

At Bishop Milner Catholic College in Dudley, 43 per cent of students picked up A* to B Grades and 69 per cent A* to C Grades with the overall pass rate at 99.3 per cent.

Head Girl Alannah Joy found out she had one Distinction*, three As and a C, Theo Kacoulli achieved an A*, two Distinction* and a B, while Matthew Timmins collected three Distinction* grades.

Principal Steve Haywood said: "We are delighted to see so many success-

ful performances and wish all students a bright and happy future."

An overall pass rate of 99 per cent was recorded at Halesowen College with all students gaining at least one A-level. Among the high performers was Emma Rolinson who picked up A*s in sociology and psychology and an A in English Literature while Adam Higgins achieved three As in biology.

Bristnall Hall Academy in Oldbury celebrated improved A-level results with 100 per cent of pupils gaining two or more passes, up seven per cent

from last year, and 80 per cent achieving three or more A-level passes. The proportion of higher grades achieved was also significantly higher than in previous years with 78 per cent of grades being at A* to C.

Principal Vince Green said: This year's strong outcomes for our young people are thoroughly deserved after the efforts of these students and the team of staff."

Ormiston Forge Academy in Cradley Heath had 63 per cent earning three or more passes, a four per cent increase on last year.

Heather the life-saver has won St John award

A YOUTH leader has been named St John Ambulance's Volunteer of the Year for the West Midlands.

Heather Griffiths, aged 34, from Halesowen, has been honoured by the first aid charity. The Volunteer of the Year title is awarded to a St John Ambulance volunteer who has 'excelled at learning, teaching, practising or supporting first aid to an exemplary level.

Heather, a young persons' service lead at the St John Ambulance unit in Halesowen, was nominated for the award after saving the life of a stranger in Brierley Hill last August.

A volunteer with the first aid charity since the age of six, Heather spotted a man sitting on the pavement, looking pale and very unwell. She stopped to see if he was OK and was told that he had been feeling unwell for weeks, and while she was calling an ambulance, the man collapsed onto the busy road. With the help of bystanders, Heather got him back onto the pavement and put him into the recovery position. He stopped breathing and Heather started CPR. She continued until paramedics arrived and re-started his heart with a defibrillator.

Heather said: "I'm just glad I was there to help, and that my years of training with St John Ambulance prepared me to deal with situations like this."

Steve Hargreaves, regional director for St John Ambulance said: "Heather's story is the very essence of what St John Ambulance is about - ordinary people doing extraordinary things through first aid."

Fuel station in bid to expand

A PETROL station near Stourbridge is set to expand, with more filling pumps and parking spaces to be provided for customers.

The plans for the BP station on Hagley Road, Oldswinford, near to the Crab-mill pub, have been recommended for approval by Dudley Council planning bosses.

Under the plans, a former central heating and plumbing specialists would be knocked down to allow the expansion of the fuel station.

A total of 11 parking spaces would be created by the move while two 80,000 litre underground fuel storage tanks would also be installed.

A final decision is set to be made by the council's planning committee next week.

Deceased man's relatives sought

WOLVERHAMPTON'S Court of Protection team wants to trace relatives of a 74-year-old man who died recently.

David Lloyd Jones, of Goldthorn Hill, Wolverhampton, had connections in Dudley, Gornal Wood and Bilston. Contact Diane Washbrook on 01902 555333.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Work to begin on new town car park

WORK on a new car park in Dudley town centre will start in the next few weeks.

The first phase of Dudley Council's 90-space car park is near completion with the demolition of the Mahoe Centre expected to end this summer - making way for work to start on the car park.

Chiefs said the Tower Street car park will improve the street scene of Tower Street by opening up views to Baylies Hall and Dudley Castle.

Work is due to be completed in time for Christmas shopping.

More star quality in Aladdin cast

BRITAIN'S Got Talent finalist Lucy Kay and magician Stefan Pejic have been added to the line-up of Wolverhampton Grand Theatre's pantomime.

Soprano Kay will play Princess Jasmine in Aladdin and illusionist Pejic will play the evil sorcerer, Abanazar.

They join Joe McEldeery as Aladdin, Lisa Riley as the Slave of the Ring, CBeebies' Ben Faulks as the Chief of the Peking Police, Doreen Tipton as the Lazy Empress of China. Aladdin runs from December 10 to January 22 at the Lichfield Street theatre.

Minister praises fresh care model

A GOVERNMENT minister visited health commissioners in Dudley to find out about new models of care.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Community Health and Care, David Mowat MP, visited Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group. He said: "Patients and staff are seeing real benefits of the exciting new care models programme in Dudley. It's great to see local GPs and social care teams working together to deliver individual care packages for patients."

Print firm growing with major investment

A PRINT manufacturer based in Lye has completed a major investment.

Customark Limited has invested £465,000 in facilities, equipment and staff in the last 12 months.

Over an 18-month period the firm has employed an additional 20 staff.

The investment has seen the Lye site benefit from three additional roll-to-roll digital printers as well as a flat-bed digital printer, enabling the capability to print on most materials, shapes and intricate components.

Bicycle made for two

AN APPEAL launched by a sight-loss charity to buy a £250 tandem bicycle is almost on target after one donor contributed more than half the cost. Staff at Sedgley's Beacon Centre want to launch a tandem cycle club for people who would be accompanied by a sighted guide.

Prison after bungling bank robber really slips up

A CROOK who backed a loser when he tried to rob a bank armed with a betting slip, has begun a lengthy prison sentence.

Jason Philips scribbled a warning on the back of the slip when he claimed to have a nail bomb and gun. The 35-year-old passed the note over the counter to a member of staff at Lloyds Bank in High Street, Sedgley, after waiting until there were no other customers around.

Miss Sally Hancox, prosecuting, told Wolverhampton Crown Court that the move backfired when the teller showed the message to the other cashiers on duty. They all followed the security procedure, stood up and walked into a rear office, leaving the hapless robber alone and empty-handed.

Philips, from Hunton Road, Erdington, was 'off his head' on cocaine, the court heard.

Police shown CCTV of the incident recognised the culprit, who had previous convictions involving 172 offences, and he was arrested in Kidderminster on July 20. His fingerprints were found on the betting slip and a carrier bag he left at the bank.

Mr Gareth Morley, defending, said: "He accepts that his behaviour caused shock, distress and fear but it was doomed to fail."

Philips, who had been jailed in February 2012 for robberies on supermarkets in Wombourne, Wordsley and Sedgley, pleaded guilty to the attempted robbery at the bank and was jailed for three years and four months.

Court date for robbery accused

STAFF at a bookmakers near Stourbridge were threatened with a shotgun during a terrifying raid, one of a spate of robberies or attempted robberies.

The first attack occurred when a man burst into William Hill in Bridgnorth Road, Wollaston, armed with a double-barrelled shotgun at around 9pm on August 12. A Sainsbury's Local nearby was then robbed an hour later. On August 15, there was an attempted robbery at William Hill in Brette Lane, Ambicote.

Michael Webb, 37, of Kingsway, Stourbridge, appeared at Dudley Magistrates Court in connection with the robbery spree. He has yet to enter a plea and is to appear at Wolverhampton Crown Court on September 15.

Forget Me Not fundraiser in park

A FORGET Me Not Fete is being held at a park in Dudley on Saturday. The event in Buffery Park from 11am to 4pm is to raise funds for Ward C3 at Russells Hall Hospital which provides care for people with dementia.

Teenage thugs admit brutal attack

FIVE thugs who left a football fan battered, bloodied and fighting for his life have pleaded guilty to their parts in the vicious crime.

Joseph Lister and Daniel Lloyd, both 19, and a youth who cannot be named for legal reasons, pleaded guilty to causing grievous bodily harm to Watford fan Nic Cruwys after Wolves' home clash against the Hornets on March 7 last year.

Ryan Meer, 19, pleaded guilty to affray, and Robert Beech, also 19, pleaded not guilty to affray, but guilty to threatening behaviour, which was accepted by the Crown. All five were acquitted of causing grievous bodily harm with intent, after a trial which lasted almost two weeks.

The guilty pleas of the men came after a CCTV

gaffe by the Crown Prosecution Service. Footage initially shown to barristers and jury at Wolverhampton Crown Court was a condensed resolution version that had been zoomed in on. Then, after barristers saw the original version in which the clothing of the attackers was clearer, they instructed the defendants to change their pleas.

Mr Cruwys was punched to the ground in Little's Lane, Wolverhampton, before more thugs laid into him while he was on the floor. He was left unconscious and ended up in a coma after the attack.

Lister, of Palmer Close, Wednesfield; Lloyd, of Longfellow Road, Sedgley; Meer, of Watling Street, Gailey; Beech, of Springhill Road, Wednesfield and the youth will all be sentenced on September

9 pending probation service reports. It is expected the 14-year-old who pleaded guilty to grievous bodily harm with intent will be sentenced at the same time.

Judge Simon Ward told the five that they should steel themselves for time behind bars. On the matter of the poor quality CCTV footage, Judge Ward added: "I am surprised and not at all impressed that this has come to light at such a late stage."

All five were bailed on conditions that they do not attend any regulation football matches, do not go into Wolverhampton city centre between the hours of 10am and 11pm on any day that Wolves are playing and don't travel to any city where Wolves are playing that day.

Away day with friends ended with fan in coma

"WHEN you go to a game of football with a friend, you hope to go home with them."

Two sets of supporters had enjoyed a pulsating encounter at Molineux between quality Championship sides vying for promotion.

The highly entertaining game between Wolves and Watford in March 2015 ended 2-2 and most supporters of both teams would probably have agreed it was a fair result.

Aside from the usual banter between opposition fans, nothing out of the ordinary occurred in the stands during the game. So it came as a massive shock when news filtered through that a Watford supporter had been seriously hurt after leaving the stadium, particularly when it became clear Nic Cruwys had been severely beaten by a large group.

Last week those men admitted to being involved in that attack in Little's Lane. Joseph Lister, of Palmer Close, Wednesfield, and Daniel Lloyd, of Longfellow Road, Sedgley, both aged 19, and a youth who cannot be identified because of his age pleaded guilty to causing grievous bodily harm.

Ryan Meer, 19, of Watling Street, Gailey, pleaded guilty to affray and Robert Beech, also 19, of Springhill Road, Wednesfield, admitted threatening behaviour. They had all previously denied causing grievous bodily harm with intent but pleaded guilty to lesser charges.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard the 44-year-old Watford fan was with friends on their way to The Blue Brick pub, near the rail station, for a drink before catching a 6pm train home. But they were confronted by between 15 and 20 youths and set upon. Mr Cruwys was left in a pool of blood as the gang weighed in with kicks and punches. The brutal attack left him in a coma for weeks.

Wolves fan Richard Cooke told the court how he came to the aid of Mr Cruwys after the attack.

"You don't expect to see what I saw, when you go to a game of football with a friend, you hope to go home with them," he said.

Mr Cooke said he spotted the throng of youths and it was as if they were 'baying for blood'.

Mr Cruwys spent four months at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham and underwent a gruelling rehabilitation process, which included occupational therapy and speech therapy. He was able to return home to his family last summer.

In March, almost a year to the day since the attack, Mr Cruwys walked onto Watford's Vicarage Road pitch to thank everyone who had supported him, including Wolves fan Ollie Floyd who set up a Just Giving fundraising page for him. He continues to travel to watch his beloved Watford play.



Little's Lane in Wolverhampton city centre, scene of the vicious attack on Watford fan Nic Cruwys



Victim Nic Cruwys spent four months in hospital



Daniel Lloyd, of Sedgley, was among the attackers

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AND off to the hairdresser's where the lad in the next seat is telling the barber how to turn him into a Peaky Blinder. Razor-cut up the neck, clippers up the back of the head and a mop of unkempt hair to top it off. It is a shame no-one has told him that he's never going to look like a Peaky Blinder because he hasn't got a face like Cillian Murphy. Sure enough, the lad emerges from the barber's looking nothing like a 1930s Birmingham gangster but resembling a roughly-uprooted carrot. There are a lot of them about.

WHY so many daft haircuts? Presumably so that when the kids report for school next month they can fulfil that ancient English tradition of being sent home again. You can feel it in the air like the gathering chill of autumn. Stupid kids with stupid haircuts and stupid parents bleating about their human rights. Another school year approaches and with it the old, old question. Who'd be a teacher?

THE independent inquiry into child abuse now has its fourth chairwoman, Alexis Jay. It has yet to hear a single word of evidence and could last for up to 12 years. I cannot help wondering how long the late, great News of the World would have taken to interview the witnesses and name and shame the guilty. Six months max?

OWN up. Did you not punch the air with joy at the report of a judge subjecting a thug-gish defendant to a taste of his own foul language? "You're a bit of a ****," John Hennigan told Judge Patricia Lynch at



Chelmsford Crown Court. "You are a bit of a **** yourself," replied the judge. "Go **** yourself!" exclaimed Hennigan. "You, too," responded the judge. So far, so good. A fat slob who racially abused a woman and her children gets sent down with some Anglo-Saxon language ringing in his ears. And then someone complained. They always do, don't they? In this case an unspecified number of complaints has been made to the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office. Judge Lynch may be disciplined. And that will satisfy the sort of silly, dangerous people who believe that justice is never fully served until a villain is exonerated and a law enforcer is punished. There is a word for such people but I'm running out of asterisks.

I TAKE the same view of allotments that I do of steam railways and vintage cars. I'm always glad that other people are looking after them.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Bowlers take matters into own hands

MEMBERS of two bowling clubs could take over the running of a council bowling green.

The Black Country Bowls Club and Crystal Bowls Club, both based in Dudley, want to lease the borough's only flat bowling green in Stevens Park, Wollescote, for ten years.

Dudley Council bosses say they are now working with the members to find a suitable way forward.

It comes after it was announced last year that bowling clubs across the borough face a staggering hike in maintenance fees – of up to £12,000 – as the cash-strapped council aims to save £20 million by 2018. Clubs currently only pay £750 towards the costs.

Worried members of the park's bowling clubs say they are now appealing to the council to take on

the maintenance of the green themselves.

Black Country Bowls Club secretary Brian Simmonds said: "They told us we would have to either accept the fees or take over the running ourselves. We now see the only way forward is for us to take on the green."

"There were complications with the Stevens Trust saying that under the deed of gift land cannot be given

away, but we feel that surely it could be leased to us.

"The worrying thing for us is that if we are not careful members will go elsewhere, which is incredibly sad."

Councillor Hilary Bills, cabinet member for environmental services, said: "We are working with the bowls club, our legal department and other park user groups to look at the detail of this request."

Work on fast food outlets has started

Report by Clare Butler

A MULTI-MILLION pound restaurant development has got under way in Stourbridge in a long-awaited scheme.

The site off Mill Race Lane will include McDonald's and KFC drive-thru branches, with the name of a third unit yet to be announced.

Plans were first granted permission back in August 2014, but due to a series of construction delays, work only officially got under way this month.

Councillor Nick Barlow, who represents the Stourbridge Town ward, said he welcomed the beginning of work on the 'long overdue' development.

He said: "Everyone is really happy that at long last the build has begun, as it has looked such a mess for so long. It will get more footfall into the town and create employment, which is always good news. It is a good opportunity all round."

Jobs

It is thought that at least 65 full and part-time jobs will be created by McDonald's – which is returning to the town – with a further 40 positions expected to be available at the KFC restaurant.

A 66-space car park will be built between the units.

Concerns about access to the site and a potential increase in rubbish were raised when the proposals were first revealed.

Councillor Barlow added: "There have been a few concerns about cars and anti-social behaviour but I think that's something that won't happen as it will be monitored well."

"The traffic will be coming off towards Amblecote and not back on the ring road as some feared, so it should have a sensible road layout. We have got to be mindful of litter but I believe that both chains are good at keeping that under control."

A spokesman for A&H Construction said the work should be finished by March next year.

Generosity saves museum money



They flue in to help – Lee Despard and Callum Young with the museum's David Williams and Ray Disney

A JOB that could have cost the Black Country Living Museum thousands of pounds, has been completed free of charge thanks to the generosity of two companies.

The museum in Tipton Road feared it would be facing a huge bill when they discovered that two chimney flues at the Edwardian St James' School needed to be replaced.

Museum staff approached companies for quotes to replace the flues, replicas which were fitted in 1991.

Luckily Worcestershire Chimney Services and Midtherm, in Dudley, agreed to do the work for free, though it could have cost thousands of pounds.

Between them, the firms created a modern, safer version of the existing flues that would still fit in with the

period style of the classroom. Thanks to custom-made parts and three days' worth of labour was needed.

Lee Despard, owner of Worcestershire Chimney Services, said: "We and Midtherm decided that we would offer our services for free. We just wanted to play a part in preserving it for future generations to enjoy. My family have got some good memories from the school. It's been a really satisfying job."

Emily Jones, marketing manager at Midtherm, added: "It has been a pleasure working with both Worcestershire Chimney Services and the Black Country Living Museum."

"We are very pleased to be a part of the local heritage and to help out where we can."

Pregnant cannabis grower is spared jail

A PREGNANT mother-of-two caught cultivating a £26,000 cannabis farm in a room at her home has been spared jail by a judge.

Karen Bate, who was of previous good character, was told by Judge James Burbidge QC: "You are entitled to one mess up in your life."

The 26-year-old had 33 plants growing in an upstairs bedroom when police raided her home on March 1, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

Mr Joanne Barker, prosecuting, said: "There was a relatively sophisticated hydroponic system. The electricity supply had also been by-passed."

The set up was capable of producing up to £29,000 worth of cannabis, the court heard.

Bate told police that she was breaking the law to pay off a debt.

Chance

She made it clear that she would not have sold the drugs but could have received 'a little bit' in return.

Bate, of Quarry Bank, pleaded guilty to producing cannabis and abstracting electricity.

She was given a six-month jail term suspended for a year and ordered to carry out 60 hours of unpaid work.

Judge Burbidge said: "You have been very foolish in committing this crime but it seems that somebody else was behind your criminal activity."

"As a result of those external pressures I will give you a chance."

Tory MP praises latest job figures

THE latest unemployment figures showing 186,000 more people are in work across the West Midlands have been welcomed by Kinver's MP

Gavin Williamson, Conservative MP for South Staffordshire, also welcomed statistics showing the number of people claiming key out of work benefits in his constituency had fallen by 965, a 60 per cent drop, since 2010.

Mr Williamson said: "The latest figures show employment is growing across all the regions and nations of the United Kingdom as we build a Britain that works for everyone not just the privileged few."

"Nevertheless, we aren't complacent, which is why we're pressing ahead with welfare reforms like Universal Credit making sure it pays for people to be in work."

Town's youth choir is seeking more singers

A CHOIR for young people starts rehearsals next month.

Got 2 Sing Youth Choir Stourbridge is open to young singers aged nine to 16. Its repertoire includes pop songs and musical theatre numbers. Call 03330 146164.

Cloudy2Clear Announce Trusted Trader Partnership



Consumer champions Which? have now joined the thousands of customers who recognise that Cloudy2Clear Windows really are a business that you can TRUST. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has received the coveted 'Which Trusted Trader' status after going through a rigorous accreditation process entirely focussed on customer service.

Group Managing Director Marcus McGee believes that Which? have endorsed Cloudy2Clear's long standing company policy of delivering the highest standards possible at all times. 'Our service is simple. If your double glazing has misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people money, although that obviously helps. Whilst a number of tradespeople

perhaps don't focus on customer care as much as they should do, we make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle.

Locally Cloudy2Clear service Dudley & the surrounding areas and manager Brian Stanley agrees that this approach is a major factor in his success. 'The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good

business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated as both my customers and, obviously a body as nationally important as Which? now recognise.'

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Merry Hill to get new bus shelters

BUS shelters at Merry Hill bus station are to be replaced soon.

Intu, which owns the shopping centre, has been given the green light to bring in larger shelters.

Shopping centre bosses are aiming to make progress with the plans for the revamp of the bus station as a whole over the coming months.

The centre is currently in talks with Transport for West Midlands about the scheme to improve the bus station.

New shelters are expected to be installed within the next few weeks.

Summer fun day for Brierley Hill

CHILDREN are being offered an array of exciting activities at Brierley Hill next month.

The Summer Fun Play Day takes place on Thursday, September 1, at the Moor Centre from 11am to 3pm.

There will be sand pits, story telling, free face painting, arts and crafts, giant games and much more to keep the young ones entertained during the play day.

All children must be accompanied by an adult. Visit www.discoverdudleyevents.co.uk or call Jacki Wynn on (01384) 817 817.

Cancer charity is packing a punch

A COSELEY-based charity that raises awareness of cancers that affect men is inviting supporters to get into the boxing ring.

Balls for Cancer wants people to train for charity bouts that take place to raise money for its work.

Both men and women can sign up online at www.ballstocancer.co.uk/boxing-for-btc website. Balls to Cancer has been going since 2011 and helps men with cancer and their families.

Great way to learn about King Alfred

THE life of Alfred the Great will be explored during a history talk in Stourbridge.

Historian Max Keen will start the autumn programme for Stourbridge Historical Society on September 15 with a talk entitled Alfred The Great: The Most Fortunate King. It takes place in the Wollaston Room at Stourbridge Town Hall from 7.30pm. For further information visit www.stourbridgehistoricalsociety.com or call David Hickman on (01384) 274014.

Store boost for charity

A SUPERMARKET in Stourbridge has raised more than £700 for charity in one weekend.

Staff at the Amblecote branch of Sainsbury's donated an impressive £712 to Hearing Dogs for Deaf People following a weekend of fundraising that took place from August 5 to 7.

Taxpayers pick up bill for more than 40 funerals

DUDLEY Council arranged 44 public health funerals, known as 'pauper funerals', in a 12-month period from April 2015.

In 11 of the funerals the deceased had no next of kin.

That marked a 19 per cent decrease on the 2014/15 financial year when the authority funded 58 public health funerals.

At the time the council's cabinet member for adult and community services suggested the high demand for pauper's funerals may reflect the fact that many people were struggling financially.

In 2013/14 there had been just 29 paupers' funerals across the borough. That year council bosses hiked the cost of cremations by seven per cent as part of its savings plan.

Dudley Council is the only authority in the Black Country and Staffordshire to routinely publish details of pauper's funerals.

Up and down the country local authorities have a duty under public health law to dispose of bodies where the deceased died alone or there are no relatives able to pay.

The funerals involve a basic service before the deceased is cremated or buried.

Earlier this year Co-operative Funeralcare signed up to a new campaign aimed at tackling the rising cost of funerals where relatives are able to foot the bill. It agreed to display a full range of prices online and at its funeral homes, one of the aims of the Fair Funerals campaign.

Team triathlon trio have target

A TRIO of accountants and business advisers from Dudley are gearing up to take part in a triathlon to help disadvantaged children.

David Baker, Tracie Clements and Wendy Knowles, from Blue Sky Corporate Finance, in Dudley, have signed up to take part in the Impetus - PEF Private Equity Triathlon, being held in Berkshire on September 17.

The money raised will support work to transform the lives of disadvantaged children and young people via education and jobs.

Wendy will swim 400m, David aims to cycle more than 21km and Tracie to run 5km. They aim to raise at least £500.

To given a donation visit justgiving.com/fundraising/BlueSky-3473438

Blood donation sessions at hall

BLOOD donors are being urged to attend sessions in Brierley Hill today (Thursday). They are being held 2pm to 3.30 and 4.30 to 7.30pm on August 25 at Brierley Hill Civic Hall in Bank Street. Call 0300 1232323.

Work gets under way on college building



Work is taking place on Dudley Advance II

WORK is progressing on Dudley College's new £12 million development, as this latest photograph shows.

The college's new construction and manufacturing building, Dudley Advance II, will sit alongside the existing £9m Dudley Advance facility at the site in Priory Road.

Work is well under way with contractors having divided the land ready for the building work to start.

When complete, the 37,000 sq ft centre will include workshops, classrooms, project spaces, resource areas, welfare and support facilities around

a four-storey building called The Hanger. It is being built on a former car park on Priory Road.

College principal Lowell Williams hailed the progress on the site as 'amazing'. He said: "It's fantastic to see Dudley Advance II coming to life."

"This exciting new facility will offer technical qualifications for the construction and manufacturing industries of the future."

"It will be truly cutting-edge, creating great new apprenticeship, training and job opportunities, while helping to up-skill current employees."

And it's amazing that this will all be happening here in Dudley, in our Learning Quarter."

Work on Dudley Advance II is being carried out for the college by contractors Speller Metcalfe.

The firm's managing director Des O'Neill said: "Now we are in the early construction stages, it is fantastic to see Advance II making good progress on the ground. As a local contractor we have also been delighted to see many of our supply chain employed directly from the local area."

Planning blow as now council face paying costs

A COUNCIL faces the double blow of paying a firm's costs having already seen two of its planning refusals overturned on appeal.

Dudley Council's planning committee turned down plans by New River Retail for two supermarkets at pub sites.

One involved demolishing Halesowen's Maypole Inn and replacing it with a store, while the other was for a store to be built next to the Ashwood Inn in Wordsley.

Both were turned down because of existing convenience stores in the area and concerns were also put forward about parking.

But both decisions were overturned on appeal by an independent planning inspectorate.

Inspector Mr Michael Boniface also invited the applicant to submit costs, citing in both cases 'unreasonable behaviour resulting in unnecessary or wasted expense'.

The application will be made to the council and an agreement made over the amount eventually paid out.

Asset

The Maypole, on Bassnase Road, was listed as an 'asset of community value' and it was said the planning committee on a site visit found parking problems.

In a report, the inspector criticised the council's submitted evidence, stating: "Very little empirical evidence was provided and concerns appear to relate more to the general traffic conditions in the area."

The proposal on Ashwood Inn was to build a store in the pub car park but the venue itself would not be affected. Mr Boniface said the applicant had submitted its case on highway and parking matters, which had been accepted by the council's planning and highways officers. But it was not 'robustly explained' by the council following its refusal how the development might create issues of highway safety.

He said: "It is clear to me the council has prevented or delayed development that should clearly have been permitted. I therefore find unreasonable behaviour resulting in unnecessary or wasted expense, as described in the planning practice guidance, has been demonstrated and a full award of costs is justified."

A third application to demolish the Summer House in Woodsetton to replace it with a supermarket, refused by the council, was also overturned at appeal but the inspector said costs were not justified for that case.

Derelict factory gutted by blaze



The damage to the old Batchit Ltd factory on Halesowen Road, in Netherton, after last week's major fire

BLACK scorch marks, smashed glass and gaping holes show the damage after a huge blaze at a derelict factory.

Huge plumes of smoke could be seen billowing from the roof of the old Batchit Ltd factory on Halesowen Road, in Netherton last Wednesday night.

Six fire crews were sent to the scene near the Saltwells Road junction at around 9.45pm, with firefighters from Oldbury, Brier-

ley Hill, Stourbridge, Haden Cross, Tipton and Dudley in attendance.

An aerial platform was also dispatched as crews worked through the night to prevent the blaze from spreading.

West Midlands Fire Service confirmed that no residents were evacuated but sections of Halesowen Road were closed while the fire was being tackled. Firefighters arrived within five minutes

of the first 999 call. Investigators are trying to pinpoint the cause, which is being treated as suspicious.

At its height there were 35 firefighters battling the blaze, which has caused substantial damage. They used water from the nearby canal.


The fire was out by around 1am last Thursday morning but one crew remained to make the site safe until around 6am.

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



A sporting well done, but relief it's all over

DRIVING home from work, my attention was drawn to three girls of about 20 lurking in the bushes of a busy country road with no footpath, staring at their phones. Apparently it's called Pokémon. Which is strange, because I always thought pokémon was the bloke you call when the chimney's blocked.

ALSO, what is all this walking around with bottled water about? Is playing Pokémon really such thirsty work?

Everywhere you look, there seem to be teenagers wandering about with a bottle of Evian in one hand and their mobile in the other.

All I can say is they must have really strong bladders.

SO that's it for the Olympics, and once again the lads and lasses have done us proud. Finishing second, ahead of mighty China, is a remarkable achievement, and a welcome tonic after the abject failure of the England football team and the frustrating inconsistency of the cricket side.

But, whisper it quietly, am I the only one who is also a little relieved it is now out of the way? Was the wall-to-wall coverage of minority sports really justified?

The other Friday, there was a horse trotting round a pound in circles. I assumed it was a warm-up, but it turned out to be the main event. Dressage they call it. I've seen more action at Crufts.

Then there's gymnastics. I know those taking part are terribly good, with a discipline and work-ethic to put many footballers to shame. But it's not a spectator sport, is it?

When I was at school gymnastics was what the unsporty kids did to avoid too much physical exertion. I loved it. Got a certificate and everything.

Most of, all, the news coverage has been ridiculous. I stopped watching the BBC breakfast news because the first 15 minutes of every bulletin was about pole-vaulting and the like.

As I said, well done to all who took part. But can we get back to normal now? It's just that I like my news bulletins to have a bit of, well, news in them.

LABOUR leader Jeremy Corbyn has been accused of being out of touch because he did not recognise Ant and Dec when shown pictures of the pair. Why?

There are lots of things you can criticise the beleaguered politician for, but if he has managed to avoid I'm A Celebrity, Britain's Got Talent, and Saturday Night Takeaway, then good for him.

Ant and Dec are the televisual equivalent of keg lager or cheap plonk.

Most of us have experienced them at some time or other, but it's not something to shout about.



The walking party which conquered Ben Nevis



Walkers raised £9,000 for the Dudley mayor's charities



Bert making his last climb up Ben Nevis at the age of 89

How Bert inspired us to walk up mountains

NATHAN BRIANT tells how the memory of Bert Bissell, the peace campaigner, will always live on, helping so many others

THE weather was poor but that didn't stop a party from Dudley commemorating a legendary peace campaigner from the town for the third consecutive year.

Legendary is a word often overused, but it is appropriate for Bert Bissell, whose life and work is not only commemorated in his home town but also 390 miles away, in Fort William in Scotland.

He took countless trips with young people, showing them Ben Nevis, the highest mountain in the British Isles. Fort William is the nearest town to the mountain. He was instrumental in maintaining links between Fort William, Dudley and Hiroshima, one of the two Japanese cities obliterated by an American atomic bomb at the end of the Second World War.

Memorial

In 1985, he unveiled a memorial to the links established between the three places.

And perhaps his most productive trip up Ben Nevis took place in 1945. It was Victory over Japan Day, or VJ Day, and Bert, who lived on Selborne Road, led a pilgrimage party from the Bible class to the summit and constructed a 'peace cairn' to commemorate the end of the Second World War. It is this which is immortalised by the trekkers.

And to recognise the impact he had on so many people's lives and his attitude towards world peace, 28 people from the Black Country walked the 10-mile round trip, with its incline of more than 4,000 ft, up the mountain recently to raise money for charities.

Councillor Steve Waltho said: "We kicked off in rainy conditions. There were about 20 of us and it was a battle to be honest – there are so few times when I have seen so much



Bert Bissell climbing Ben Nevis on November 11, 1972, to lay a wreath

water [on Ben Nevis]. When we were there the conditions weren't good and it just made it more treacherous. I have got £300 to £400 from people from work. I would say we are going to exceed £5,000. It'll probably be much higher than that.

"We think it's just the real appeal of the event over three years. For three years myself, [Dudley MP] Ian Austin and [fellow Dudley councillor] Dave Tyler came together; Ian knows the Bissell family. The first year attracted 10 or 11 walkers; in 2015 there were 15 and this year it attracted the most ever."

He added: "The very first year we contacted a councillor up there. He's very interested in what we are trying to do up there. There are three stained glass windows moved from Dudley to Fort William [to mark Mr Bissell's contribution]."

"Bert was 96 when he died in 1998. He

started the Bible club back in 1925 in Bicken Street. He is usually credited as being Dudley's first probation officer – even before probation officers existed. He used to take young people and set them on the right path. But he took a whole interest in world peace.

"And there is a peace cairn at the top of Ben Nevis, made by the groups of young people taken up there and of course Bert himself. He was an absolute phenomenon. I don't know of any other person who has the freedom of two different boroughs. He was recognised in Fort William and Dudley."

But despite Councillor Waltho's admiration, there is one regret he has – that he never got to meet Mr Bissell himself, never got to speak to him about his ideals. He attended a meeting in the mid-1990s at which Mr Bissell spoke, but he never met him.

Mr Bissell begun taking Bible classes up

Snowdon in Wales then went to Ben Nevis for the first time in the early 1930s. It was there he formed a lifelong love for that range. He is a well-known figure in Fort William; he used to give talks to hundreds of schoolchildren.

The Highland Council's Councillor Thomas MacLennan said: "I'm 53 and the relationship with Dudley and Fort William was really strong. They came up again three years ago and Bert Bissell is well known in Fort William."

Such was the impact that when Mr Bissell talked at schools in the town, people remember them decades on.

Mr Bissell's family arrived in the Black Country in the 1920s from Yorkshire. Born in 1902, he was one of five sons, their father a Methodist minister. He helped young people for decades and the regular blood donor was rewarded for his service when he was awarded an MBE in 1959. His life is commemorated with a monument opposite Dudley Council House in Coronation Gardens.

Astley Blake, who now runs the Bible class Bert set up along with other campaigners Damian Corfield, Shaz Saleem and Steve Rayner and former Dudley police chief Richard Green, also took part.

Charities

The party included Dudley's Mayor Councillor Mohammed Hanif and other councillors Keiran Casey and Cathryn Bayton. They were also helped by National Express, who sponsored the climb. They provided a coach for the stretch from the Black Country to Scotland and back again – a journey of nearly 800 miles.

All funds raised this year will go to the Councillor Hanif's chosen charities for the year. They are the Friends of Alfie Johnson – which helps children with disabilities – the Dudley Centre for Inclusive Living and Diabetes UK.

The town legend was a friend of the Austin family and someone current Dudley North MP Ian Austin MP knew well as a child. Mr Austin said in June: "It goes to show the enduring legacy of Bert's work in the community."

* Donations in Mr Bissell's memory can be donated online at bertbissellmemorialwalk.co.uk

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Investigation into fatal fire continues



The scene of the fierce blaze at Spring Road in which pensioner Gillian Howard died despite efforts to save her

THE cause of a blaze in which a pensioner died is still being investigated, an inquest has heard.

Gillian Howard, 67, died after the fire in Spring Road, Netherton, despite the brave efforts of neighbours to save her. Her daughter Nicola was taken to hospital after escaping the fire.

Police and the fire service are now investigating the cause of the fire, which broke out on May 19.

At an inquest which opened last week, coroner's officer Russell Williams told the Black Country Coroners

Court: "She died at her home address. She lived at Spring Road in Netherton with her daughter Nicola. Her daughter was her full-time carer to help her after a spinal injury she had previously suffered. She was also being treated for breast cancer.

"She slept in a converted downstairs bedroom, and her daughter also normally slept there. On the night of the fire, she went to sleep at about 8pm and her daughter went shortly after.

"Nicola managed to escape but sadly her mother was unable to get out and died.

"The cause of the fire is being in-

vestigated by the police and fire service but there are no criminal charges being brought."

He confirmed that Mrs Howard's body had been released so her funeral could be held.

The pensioner's body was found in the front lounge of the semi-detached house. She was confirmed dead at the scene.

Miss Howard, 36, was taken to Russells Hall Hospital and treated for smoke inhalation and shock.

Senior Coroner Zafar Siddique adjourned the inquest until September 29.



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Don't wait for another tragedy on road

SO council bosses have decided that following investigation of the tragic death of a father-of-eight on 'death road' Oakham Road, it was decided that changes were not needed and only a small majority of cars monitored were found to be speeding.

I would challenge Councillor Hilary Bills and any member of the authority's highway section, along with any member of the police, to accompany me on any week day between 8 and 9am and 4 and 5.30pm to attempt to cross this road by one of the so-called local safety schemes.

Perhaps if you bring along a toddler in a pushchair or your elderly relative with a walking stick to cross with us you may realise the dangers involved.

Volume of traffic along this road has increased dramatically since road traffic measures at Burnt Tree.

The 'local safety scheme' mentioned is, I assume, the recent road markings displaying a pushchair and woman crossing. The positioning of these road markings by the junction of Tansley Hill Road means anyone attempting to cross here has to cross virtually on a blind bend whilst watching two

other junctions for cars filtering into Oakham Road.

No cars ever give way for you to cross and given the dangerous position most would not choose to cross here.

I walk along this road regularly between 4 and 6pm and would say on average between 20 and 40 cars whizz past you, some at excessive speeds, before you have the opportunity to cross safely. Please don't wait for another tragedy to happen before some form of road calming measures are considered.

RUTH CRAWFORD
Dudley

Esther in call to 'Bag It, Beat It'

THIS September is Women and Heart Disease Awareness Month at the British Heart Foundation (BHF) and I'm writing to ask your readers to help fund vital research by taking part our in 'Bag It, Beat It' campaign.

I've donated to my local shop and I'd encourage all your readers to do the same. Fill a bag with unwanted clothes, shoes, books, handbags, DVDs, CDs, bric-a-brac and children's toys, to 'Bag It, Beat It'. Donations will help the BHF fund life-saving heart research.

Coronary heart disease is the single biggest killer in the UK, causing the deaths of over 6,410 people in the West Midlands each year, over 2,540 of which are women, but with the continued support of the community the BHF can fight harder to reduce this figure. To find your local BHF shop visit www.bhf.org.uk/bagit or to book a free collection call 0800 250 0024.

DAME ESTHER RANTZEN

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

EMAIL

dudley.chron@expressandstar.co.uk

Plea to help dog shelter in Romania

LAST year we appealed for help to support Amicii Dog Shelter in Romania.

This small dedicated shelter offers sanctuary to 200 dogs rescued from the streets and the vile inhumane public shelters.

Can you help them again? They desperately need donations of adult and puppy dog food. Blankets, sheets and towels are required as the winter temperature drops to minus 20. Flea treatment, shampoo, dog bowls, unwanted dog medication, bandages, dressing packs and Sudocrem are also very welcome.

To help the dogs keep warm in winter they need medium and large size dog coats.

If you're able to make a financial donation it would help to greatly reduce the vet bills.

Please help if you can to make life more bearable for these dogs.

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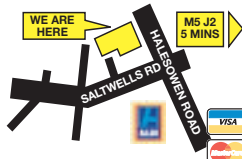
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Cricket stalwart has died aged 69

A CRICKET stalwart from Wombourne has died following a short illness. Former police officer John Crow was 69 when he died on August 7 at New Cross Hospital from cancer.

His wife of 36 years Joyce, 71, paid tribute to her late husband who was a detective sergeant with Staffordshire Police. She said: "He knew everybody and everybody knew him after 30 years in the force. He was outgoing, spoke his mind, and was a very conscientious police officer."

He also leaves daughters Rachel and Nicola and son Simon.

He had played cricket for Wombourne Cricket Club, as well as Himley, Wolverhampton and Fordhouses.

His funeral was held on Monday at St Benedict Biscop C Of E Church.

Homes bid for derelict site



A former industrial site labelled a 'grot spot' is in line to be re-developed for homes

A DISUSED industrial site in Rowley Regis that has become an eyesore could be revamped with the construction of nearly 200 homes.

Plans to overhaul the former Norbert Dentressangle site, in Doulton Road, have been submitted to Sandwell Council.

Developer Countryside hopes to demolish the buildings currently on the brownfield site and build 188 homes.

In a planning statement, the developers said the land "is currently derelict and encourages anti-social behaviour".

Rejuvenate

Ward councillor Susan Eaves welcomed the move, saying it was much-needed and would rejuvenate a problem site.

Councillor Eaves explained: "That's been a grot spot for a while now. It does need

Landlord who failed to act is fined again

A LANDLORD has been found guilty for a second time of allowing a house to remain in serious disrepair. In total the two prosecutions have cost Adnan Rashid more than £7,000.

Rashid, 29, failed to attend court and was found guilty in his absence of failing to comply with an improvement notice served by Sandwell Council.

The house on Beeches Road, Rowley Regis, had problems including damp and mould, broken windows, defective doors and a damaged roof allowing water to leak inside.

Rashid, of Station Road, Brierley Hill, was initially prosecuted after complaints about the condition of the house in 2015. A second case was brought against the landlord when he failed to carry out repairs at the property.

Rashid was fined £3,000, costs of £551.16, a victim's surcharge of £120 and £776.36 costs at the hearing last week. He was handed a previous fine of £3,046 last November.

Beacon Centre project boost not enough to secure services

THE Beacon Centre for the Blind, based in Sedgley, has been awarded a £300,000 grant to get visually impaired people into work.

But the charity's services across the Black Country remain under threat after council cuts.

The sight loss charity is among several community groups which has received hundreds of thousands of pounds from the Big Lottery Fund.

The funding, totalling £304,816, will be allocated over the next five years and will enable the charity to continue its hugely successful Beacon4Work programme which has helped more than

60 people living with sight loss into work around the region. But Beacon Centre's services for the elderly are still at risk following the withdrawal of £250,000 in funding from Dudley Council.

Vital

Beacon Centre chief executive Arwyn Jones said: "We would like to thank the Big Lottery Fund for its support in this vital project and it is a welcome boost of confidence in our work, in particular that with working age living with sight loss. Those living with sight loss of working age are often very keen to remain or get into

employment and we want to help break down the barriers that may stop them.

"Sadly this award does not replace the recent funding cuts imposed by Dudley Council as it is for a very specific project around employment, whereas the council funding supported elderly and more vulnerable people with sight loss to access our day centre services and help them live independently in their own home."

Another grant saw £389,152 given to Age UK in order to fund a project run by Age UK South Staffordshire to get more elderly people helping at primary schools.

Marathon runner aims for lucky 13

A 50-year-old man from Tividale is embarking on a challenge of running 13 full marathons in 13 days to raise money for the Alzheimer's Society.

Almost all of his challenges will be taking place in the Black Country.

Paul's challenges, inspired by comedian Eddie Izzard, were due to begin this week before finishing on September 4 with the Wolverhampton Marathon. He hopes to raise £750.

He said: "I decided to take part in this challenge for Alzheimer's Society because research shows that 850,000 people in the UK have a form of dementia. This will soar to two million people by 2051."

To sponsor Paul, visit www.justgiving.com/chin13.

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FOCUS ON SEDGLEY AND GORNAL AREAS

Families struggling to buy enough food get help

A GOLF tournament with a difference is coming to Sedgley next month to encourage players of all ages and abilities to take up the sport.

The Beacon Butler Challenge Cup and family fun day takes place on September 24 at The Mark Butler Golf Academy in Sedgley from 10am-4pm.

It has been organised by the Beacon Centre for the Blind and the golf academy. The competition itself is aimed primarily at people with disabilities, to encourage them to find out more about the sport.

Mark Butler, director of the golf academy said: "We already do a lot of work with people with disabilities and in particular the Beacon Centre for the Blind."

The day will also feature a tombola, face painting and arts and crafts.

More parking to help trade

MOTORISTS in Gornal Wood now have access to more parking spaces.

Fourteen new spaces are being introduced in Abbey Road, near the bus station, in an effort to boost trade in the village.

Shoppers will be able to stay for two hours but will not be allowed to return for the next three, between 8am and 6pm Monday to Saturday.

Sections of the road will also become no waiting zones.

A GROUP of volunteers has set up a scheme to get supplies to people who are short of food. The Food for Thought group in Sedgley is swapping unwanted items for food and other household necessities such as cleaning supplies and toiletries.

They then pass these on to people in times of emergency as well as giving the food items to the Black Country Foodbank, which helps vulnerable individuals and families in crisis by providing food. It also helps find a long term solution for those struggling to feed their families.

Community campaigner Rebecca Gentle said: "I got involved in this project because I was concerned about local families struggling to feed their children over the summer holidays."

Difference

"Jackie Jevons, who runs the Facebook group, is doing a great job and making a real difference to local people."

"People who want to help can join the Facebook group or gather food donations and we can arrange to pick them up and pass them on."

"Just let me know by emailing rebecca.gentle8@

by Heather Large

gmail.com and everything they give will make a huge difference to people struggling to feed their families"

Dudley North MP Ian Austin said: "It's terrible that people are going hungry in the 21st century, but it's fantastic that Jackie, Rebecca and the Sedgley Food for Thought group have stepped in to help them."

"It shows how volunteers are making a difference in the local community and I hope local people will join the Facebook page and get involved."

The Facebook page can be found at www.facebook.com by searching 'Food for Thought in Sedgley'.

Recently Black Country Foodbank was given a gift of a van by Amlin Motors of Cradley Heath.



Old Bull's Head Inn landlady Lyndsey Morris, centre, with regulars Ivan Cox and Karen Wilcox

Old Bull's Head takes top pub title

THE Old Bull's Head Inn on Redhall Road, Lower Gornal, was the overwhelming favourite to take the top honour of being the Express & Star's Dudley pub of the year.

More than 1,500 tokens were collected backing the Old Bull's Head—more than three times its nearest rival.

Delighted with the accolade from The Chronicle's sister newspaper, licensee Lyndsey Morris said: "We couldn't believe it, and the customers were ecstatic."

"We are a community pub, and see the same people come in from Gornal. Everybody knows everybody and we know all of the customers by their first name."

Lyndsey took over The Old Bull's Head 18 months ago when it underwent extensive refurbishment. She lives runs the pub alongside her partner Les Bullock, also 41, along with a team. The Black Country Ales brewery is behind the pub.

Showtunes for a young generation

A NEW musical theatre company called Signature's, present their first performance, entitled Welcome to the Night!, tonight (Thursday) and tomorrow at the Dormston Mill Theatre in Sedgley.

This company is a group of young performers who will be presenting songs from West End and Broadway hits including The Little Mermaid, Chicago, The Book of Mormon and We Will Rock You. Tickets cost £15 and to buy one visit the group's Facebook page or message Jacob Kohli.

Sedgley's Phoenix Theatre Company is looking for members to join for their next show, Annie Get Your Gun, at the Mill Theatre in February. They are just about to go into rehearsal and are seeking performers aged 16 and over. Call Richard Bourne on 07534 295285 or email info@phoenixtheatre.co.uk

Dog show at sanctuary

A FAMILY fun day and dog show is being held at a Sedgley animal sanctuary.

The event at Brockwood, in Catholic Lane, is on Saturday from 10am to 5pm.

Admission to the fun day and dog show is £4 for adults and £2.50 for children.

There will be breed, obedience, agility and fun classes for the dogs and for visitors to enjoy.

A falconry display will also be taking place at the event.

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100-year-old is life and soul of the party

IT was a celebration fit for a Queen as Fanny Skelding donned her glad rags and partyed with family for her 100th birthday.

Mrs Skelding was showered with gifts, cake, balloons and champagne at The Brambles care home, in Stourbridge, on August 16.

The Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Mohammed Hanif, also came along to join the festivities and offer his congratulations for the momentous milestone.

Fanny was born and raised in Corngreaves Road, in Cradley Heath.

Her parents had both been widowed and re-married again, meaning Fanny had six brothers and four half-sisters.

She married her husband John in 1939 at St Luke's Church, in Cradley Heath. They had met while hop-picking and described it as 'love at first sight'.

They settled and spent their married life in Cradley Heath, having one daughter, Jill.

Fanny now has one grand-daughter Laura, one great-granddaughter Yvette and a great great grandson Hugo, aged two.

Brambles care manager, Dee Whitehouse, said: "For her age

Fanny is incredible. It is such an achievement.

"She moved in with us in August last year but before that she was still living on her own as was very independent.

"She is really popular and loved by all of the staff and residents as she made friends so easily.

"She doesn't let anything hold her back and enjoys a tippie of Baileys before bedtime too.

Soaps

"She loves watching the soaps on TV, especially Emmerdale and Coronation Street.

"It is amazing to have a resident at the care home who is at such a great age as Fanny is."

Fanny received a message from the Queen and the Department of Works and Pensions congratulating her.

The special birthday party was held in the conservatory at the Vicarage Road care home.

Ms Whitehouse added: "Fanny said she really enjoyed the day.

"All of her family and friends were present and she had a sing-song too.

"I'm sure we'll be celebrating again with her next year."



Centenarian Fanny Skelding proudly shows her congratulations card from the Queen

Folks are getting down to the 22 Push Up Challenge

COUNCILLORS, police officers and the public are rallying together to take part in the 22 Push Up Challenge.

The scheme is raising awareness for army veterans suffering Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Dudley councillor Stuart Henley and Superintendent Keith Fraser of Wolverhampton police are among those who have been posting videos on social media in support of veterans.

The challenge consists of 22 days and 22 push ups on each day to raise awareness for the 22 ex-servicemen and women who commit suicide every day in the US from PTSD.

Mr Henley, who serves the Halesowen North ward, is on day 13 of the challenge which he is taking part in because he has friends from his time as a fire-fighter who suffer from PTSD.

Superintendent Keith Fraser and other officers from Wolverhampton Police Station have also joined the effort. He said: "One of my officers encouraged a number of colleagues to take part in the 22 push up challenge to honour those who serve and to help raise awareness for veteran suicide prevention through education. This is a worthy cause."

Zac Foster, 20, is from Darlaston and was in the Air Cadets for eight years and is now a student. He said: "I have seen the ins and outs of military lifestyle, so to me PTSD is a strong issue which is sometimes forgotten, we see soldiers move out to frontline, but we never see what happens to the soldiers on the other side. I wanted to raise awareness."

Footballer's family call for 'robust' investigation

THE family of former Aston Villa star Dalian Atkinson has welcomed the launch of a criminal probe into his death and insisted there must be a 'robust' investigation.

Two West Mercia Police officers are facing an investigation after Mr Atkinson was Tasered in Telford. The 48-year-old died 90 minutes after being shot with the stun gun in the early hours of Monday, August 15.

The retired footballer's death is being investigated by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC), which insists it will carry out 'a full and thorough' inquiry. The police watchdog said it would focus on 'the level and type of force used' by officers.

In a statement released through the charity Inquest, Mr Atkinson's family said: "We are still in shock as to the circumstances in which Dalian died.

Determined

"We are determined to get justice for him, which means getting to the truth.

"We welcome the IPCC's decision that this will be a criminal investigation and emphasise their request that there should be no speculation in the media as to what happened to Dalian. This could prejudice the criminal investigation and any potential prosecution.

"We ask that anyone with information about what happened to Dalian in the early hours of Monday, August 15, contacts the IPCC.

"We are looking to the IPCC to carry out a thorough and robust investigation that will ultimately provide transparency and accountability. Dalian's memory requires nothing less."

The two officers have been served with gross misconduct notices but the IPCC stressed the launch of a criminal investigation did not necessarily mean criminal charges will follow.

Further analysis of the Taser is being carried out, the IPCC said, while a team of investigators has already



Dalian Atkinson - death probe gathered statements from 'a number of witnesses'.

IPCC Commissioner Derrick Campbell said: "Having carefully considered the evidence gathered so far, we are undertaking a criminal investigation into the circumstances surrounding Mr Atkinson's death and the level and type of force used.

"Two police officers will be interviewed under criminal caution by IPCC investigators.

"As this is a criminal investigation, the IPCC is limited in the amount of information which can be released into the public domain.

"I would ask people to be patient during the progress of our investigation and not to add to speculation about the circumstances of Mr Atkinson's death."

Mr Atkinson was Tasered after police were called to a disturbance at his father's house in Meadow Close at 1.30am.

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Thousand mile round trip to get a haircut



Ray James travels 1,000 miles from Scotland and back in his Morris Minor to get his hair cut by Andrew Gearing in Woodsetton

A DUDLEY barber has a loyal customer who makes a 1,000 mile trip from Scotland to get his hair cut.

Former Black Country resident Ray James travels around four times a year in his Morris Minor to get a trim by Andrew Gearing at his barber shop called Wanna Haircut, in Woodsetton.

Mr James has been making the journey for the latest 15 years and he has generated both local and national interest.

Andrew said: "He is a local charac-

ter and a mad Albion fan! Ray just gets a normal hair cut. I think he has done about 40,000 miles travelling to get his haircut with me."

Ray used to live in Tipton before moving to Scotland but he would still return to the region to get his hair cut in the Black County.

Funeral

It was the funeral of Ray's former barber that led to him to getting his haircuts by Andrew.

He explained: "At his old barber's funeral, Ray asked his barber's wife

where does a barber go to get their haircut? And his wife said me.

"Ever since he has been coming to my shop. He visits family and friends when he comes down to the region too."

Ray's Morris Minor generates a lot of interest on his travels. "People stop him everywhere he goes because of that car," said Andrew.

Ray stopped off at Wanna Haircut in August for his latest trim from Andrew before setting back off on the long journey to his home in northern Scotland.

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Quote: JGRT

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Housing groups join partnership

HOUSING associations from across the West Midlands have formed a partnership to help deliver thousands of new and affordable homes.

The West Midlands Housing Association Partnership will provide a single voice to help the newly-formed West Midlands Combined Authority deliver its social and economic aims through the development of new homes.

The group represents housing associations with a total of 120,000 homes across the West Midlands, with 6,630 homes built by its members last year.

The 12 'core' members employ 18,500 people and claim to add £600 million to the region's economy each year. They now want to involve all housing associations – which rent houses and flats to people on low incomes or with particular needs – from the West Midlands in the partnership.

New First World War memorial



Michael Harris and former councillor Clem Bough at the new Coseley War Memorial

A STONE memorial has been unveiled to honour the 450 people from a Black Country town killed in the First World War.

More than 100 years on from the start of the conflict, a stone memorial has been put in pride of place in Coseley to mark their sacrifice.

Lost or damaged trees originally planted for the soldiers in Coseley's Avenue of Remembrance in 1920 have also been restored.

It is all thanks to a £6,500 fundraising campaign by resident Michael Harris, 54, from Bridgewater Drive, in the town.

Mr Harris' great-great-grandfather Private Edward Harris died in the conflict on April 28, 1917. He was in the Staffordshire Regiment 2nd Battalion and he was posthumously awarded the British War Victory Medal.

The new memorial will be officially un-

Arriva two for one travel deal via app

Bus firm Arriva is offering two for one bus travel over the Bank Holiday weekend via an internet app deal.

Pairs will be able to travel on Arriva buses in and around the West Midlands for a 24-hour period with the special "2 for 1" m-ticket. The deal will be running from Saturday to Bank Holiday Monday.

Rob Cheveau, area managing director for Arriva West Midlands, said: "We're encouraging anyone who might not see the bus as their first form of transport to give it a go and be impressed by the comfort it offers.

"There really is a lot to do and see in the West Midlands and we at Arriva are hoping this makes it that bit easier to get there and enjoy your day hassle free. The ticket is designed to alleviate the stress of travel on a very busy weekend and is simple and easy to use."

Download the Arriva m-ticket app and buy the 2 for 1 day ticket in advance, activate and present to the driver.

Developer pulls out of homes scheme at former school site

PLANS to transform the site of a former school and college campus in Stourbridge with new homes have fallen through after the preferred developers pulled out of a deal.

Cameron Homes, who were chosen as the developers of the former Longlands School in Stourbridge, have confirmed that they will not go ahead with revamping the site.

Community leaders have described the setback as a blow, but said that they still hoped to see site developed in the future, despite the setback.

The Longlands site was a school between 1912

and 1990 before Stourbridge College took it over as an arts campus.

The land was last used back in 2011 before Stourbridge College relocated its art department to a new campus on Venture Way in Brierley Hill.

There has been concern about vandalism at the site.

Unfortunate

Wollaston and Stourbridge Town ward councillor Nick Barlow said: "It is unfortunate but it is one of those things.

"There has obviously been a delay in getting the college developed but we will have to wait for

the college to work with interested parties to get the development moving."

Cameron Homes and BMet did not wish to comment.

Dudley Council's regeneration boss, Councillor Khurshid Ahmed, said the developer's decision was a blow but that the local authority would continue to look for a new developer for the site.

He said: "We are disappointed this deal fell through, which was something beyond our control, but have started marketing the site again with immediate effect.

"We share people's frustrations, but rest assured we are working together with BMet and our agent to secure a developer for the site."

It's oarsome! Cash for boat

A ROWING boat that can be used by people with disabilities will be launched in Dudley next month.

Access in Dudley (AID) has secured a £10,000 grant from Sport England to buy a stable quad rowing boat, suitable for four or five people.

The first boat of its kind in the area, it will be used primarily to give people with disabilities the opportunity to learn how to row. Dudley Rowing Club is working in partnership with Access in Dudley to provide the sessions.

The bid to Sport England has been supported by Netherton Water Sports Centre, Dudley Council and British Rowing. The boat, named AID1 in honour of the organisation that secured its funding, will be launched on Thursday, September 1, at Netherton Reservoir.

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Woman hurt in post crash

A WOMAN was injured after a car smashed into a lamp post in Gornal on Sunday night.

She was treated in the back of an ambulance for minor injuries after the black Audi A3 she was travelling in hit the post in Sandfields Road, Gornal.

A West Midlands Fire Service spokesman said: "We got a call at around 10.49pm on Sunday evening from the police. The female occupant of the car was treated in an ambulance for minor injuries."



A cracking shot of children enjoying VE Day – Victory in Europe Day – on Tuesday, May 8, 1945 in Gordon Street, Wolverhampton



Birmingham Street, Dudley, in the 1920s – another insatiable place. Thanks to Dudley Archives & Local History



North Street, Wolverhampton, in the early 20th Century – an area of bad-quality housing but strong neighbourhood loyalties. Thanks to Wolverhampton Archives and Local Studies

A time when we mattered more than you or I, in the community

WE live in a 'me and mine' world. The cult of the individual, of 'doing it for me', of watching out for myself, and of 'it's nothing to do with me' has been proclaimed from the highest level and has pervaded all aspects of society.

We spend our time looking out for ourselves, watching our backs, getting on with our own lives – and more and more we are on our own.

We live at the back of our houses and in our back gardens. Our front door step is used only as an access into our private space, not to stand upon and look out at the life of the street and engage with it.

We don't join clubs like we used to and we don't flock to the rec as once we did to play games of 20 a-side football.

Our eyes are turned resolutely away from the public sphere and focused instead on our own little world. We sit transfixed by texting on our mobile phones, we com-

MEMORY LANE

By Professor Carl Chinn

municate with our computers, we play with hi-tech equipment, and we watch satellite television that tells us of goings on across the world when we know so little about what's happening around the corner.

And when we do go outside we head as fast as we can for our cars to place ourselves safely within an extension of our home.

We have become more insular and less neighbourly. This is a rapid reversal of the world in which so many of us grew up.

That was indeed a 'we and ours world' where everything was part of a pool into which everyone could dip.

That sense of mutuality was highlighted by the the Co-op, building societies and trade unions, but its roots lay firmly in the family. Very little was owned individually, everything belonged to each member, be they young or old.

Mothers and fathers worked not for their

own benefit but for the wellbeing of the family as a collective unit and taught their children the same belief.

But it was not only the good things that were shared, so too were hardships – and hardships abounded in working-class England. If an old person had no fuel, someone would give them a bucket of slack. If a man was injured or killed in an accident at work, then the neighbours would pull together to help his widow and children get by.

Women, especially older women, were at the centre of this community action.

They found out what was happening through gossip. If a woman was ill, someone would always feed her kids and do her washing. If she was in labour, an old lady would come and help with the birth.

When someone died, another old lady would lay them out so that the family and neighbours could pay their respects, whilst yet another old lady would collect the money from the neighbours for the wreath.

And it was also respected old women who would arrange the charabanc trips to the

country or the seaside and the street parties that celebrated the great events in the life of the nation, like VE Day and the Coronation of the Queen.

On Tuesday May 8, 1945, that day's papers carried the news that it was "VE Day Today". In the West Midlands, as elsewhere, VE Day was marked by the pealing of church bells, the relaying by loudspeakers of the King's broadcast speech at 9pm, parades of Civil Defence organisations, and, of course, street parties.

Overnight, men and women had happily hung up bunting and flags, and it seemed that the poorer the neighbourhood the more colourful and plentiful were the decorations that garlanded the streets.

As the preparations were made, they were accompanied by the bangs of fireworks that some people with foresight had saved from before the war – for there had been no public sale of fireworks for six years.

The day itself was a damp one, but not even the rain could mar the cheerfulness that abounded.



An atmospheric photo showing two women walking up Brown Street, Kates Hill, Dudley, in the early 1950s



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Sculptor Luke aims to inspire students



Sign of the times – Luke Perry working on the new sculpture for King Edward VI College at his Cradley Heath workshop

A CELEBRATED Black Country sculptor has created a work to say thank you to the college where he developed his talents.

Luke Perry is well known for his striking pieces that celebrate the industrial heritage of the region but his latest is also inspired by his time studying at King Edward VI College in Stourbridge.

The 33-year-old artist attended the college between 2000 and 2003 and still has a personal link as his wife Natalie works as an art technician there. So when asked to produce a centre-piece for the college grounds, working

with current students, Luke jumped at the chance and has been working on the design of the sculpture, which is due to be installed this week, since June.

He said: "This has been a very personal job, and it is great to put a sculpture in a place that will be used by students and become part of the old King Edwards but also the new."

Inspired by the architecture of the historic college, which was founded in 1552, Luke has created a piece that he says draws upon, and parodies, the neo-Gothic.

He said: "It is two stone octagons

placed on top of each other, similar to a cenotaph, and then projecting from that is a cast iron and steel fabricated piece, which represents a moral compass. All around it there are signposts and quotes from literature and film."

The quotes include 'I am the master of my fate' from the poem Invictus, to advice offered in blockbuster Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade 'You lost today, kid, but that doesn't mean you have to like it'.

The work has also reunited Luke with his former English teacher Rosie Shale, who helped him and the students find fitting inspirational quotes.

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'Thrilling' new director aims to strike a chord



Expressive – the CBSO's new musical director, Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, has won plaudits for her energy and talent SHE is following in the footsteps of Sir Simon Rattle and Andris Nelsons.

The new music director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, 29-year-old Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, will pick up the baton at her 'welcome' concert in charge of the CBSO tomorrow evening (Friday).

The Lithuanian has won plaudits for her energy and talent and from September 2016 she will become officially the CBSO's 12th chief conductor for a period of at least three years.

She made her debut with the orchestra in July 2015 and so impressed musicians, management and audiences alike that she was asked to return in January to conduct a special concert.

Gražinytė-Tyla was formerly assistant conductor at the Los Angeles Philharmonic. She is also music director of the Salzburg Landestheater, in which city she won the Salzburg festival young conductors award.

Chief executive Stephen Maddock said: "There was an instant chemistry between Mirga and our musicians, and the excitement in Symphony Hall at her concerts was palpable. Mirga

is thrilling audiences wherever she goes."

Moritz Pfister, the orchestra's principal second violin, agreed. "She's a very popular choice. She's very musical, and also extremely expressive. She has a clear idea of what she wants, but at the same time she's very receptive to what the orchestra has to offer."

Gražinytė-Tyla said: "I felt so at ease working with the CBSO, and I can't wait to get started. Every single musician in the orchestra is an artist with great individuality and sense of responsibility."

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Flying Scotsman coming to Brum

THE world's most famous steam locomotive, Flying Scotsman, is coming to Birmingham before heading to the Severn Valley.

It will be at Tiseley Locomotive Works during Birmingham Heritage Week and in steam and on public display from September 16 to 18. The iconic loco will then operate on the Severn Valley Railway between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth from September 21 to 26.

Visitors are able to purchase tickets at Tiseley to walk through the corridor in the tender and onto the footplate for an explanation of the driver and fireman's controls.

The locomotive has undergone a complete overhaul and will be on loan courtesy of the National Railway Museum.

Full Details of the three-day Flying Scotsman at Tiseley event, admission prices and instructions for the purchase of tickets can be found at www.VintageTrains.co.uk/FlyingScotsman website.

Roy downs tools for his second retirement



Roy Reynolds is retiring for a second time, aged 69

A RETIRING employee has been praised by the firm where he worked for more than 18 years.

Roy Reynolds, 69, retired from Dudley company Petford Tools, surrounded by colleagues thanking him for all his hard work and wishing him well.

Managing director at Petford Tools, Melvin Sinar, said: "He is a truly committed and honest gentleman and a valued member of staff who will be really missed."

He had actually taken early retirement from his previous job as an engineer in the bus industry, before he decided to enter the workplace again with the Dudley toolmakers. He was quickly promoted and ran the company's quality management systems for more than 17 years.

Mr Sinar said: "He was very well respected and a lovely gentleman." Mr Reynolds added: "I have always enjoyed going to work. It has been great to see the company grow over the years. When I started there were only about 25 people. Now it must be around 140."

The father-of-two lives with wife Sandra in Amblecote and has two grandchildren.

Shares to put £5m SVR plan on track

A £5 million scheme to improve the Severn Valley Railway will be funded by the selling of shares.

The improvements at Bridgnorth would see the addition of a 53-bed staff hostel, a station cafe and toilets. All the money raised from the share sale will be spent on the major overhaul, likely to be carried out in three phases.

The first phase will be to restore parts of the railway in the style of the Great Western Railway in the 1900s.

The original bar, waiting rooms, and a new buffet and toilets will all be developed in the first phase starting next October. The second phase will involve a new turntable being installed for engines and improvements to the car park at the top of the site. The final phase will be the building of the accommodation block for volunteers.

It is an investment that the SVR sees as bringing the station up to the same standard as the one in Kidderminster. The shares will go on sale this winter.

More black and Asian blood donors are urgently needed

MORE black and south Asian people are needed as blood donors in the Black Country.

NHS Blood and Transfer (NHS-BT) is urging people to donate blood as part of the Missing Type campaign, particularly from the black and Asian communities.

The organisation revealed 12,053 people in the Black Country, including Wolverhampton, Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall gave blood at least once last year.

But out of those were just 539 black people and 1,833 south Asian people.

This is despite people from Black

and Minority Ethnic backgrounds more likely to contract illnesses including sickle cell disease which may require a blood transfusion.

Survive

Abdul Alim, aged 28, from Sandwell, has thalassaemia which leaves him constantly weak and tired due to low haemoglobin levels meaning he consequently needs two to three units of blood transfused every four weeks in order to survive.

He is of Bangladeshi background and works as a support and development worker for the OSCAR Sandwell charity.

He said: "I feel reborn after a transfusion. Blood donation is a special gift and it is like being given another life."

In England, 3.5 per cent of the population is black African or black Caribbean but only 0.64 per cent of donors are from black communities, and 5.6 per cent of the population is south Asian, yet they are only 1.1 per cent of all donors.

Low figures have been put down to several barriers including limited time to donate, lack of awareness about the problem, fear of needles and religious permissibility – despite no major religion in the UK opposing blood donation.



Abdul Alim – transfusion

Check before travel advice

PASSENGERS are being advised to check before they travel this bank holiday as rail improvement work takes place.

While more than 95 per cent of the railway will be open as usual, over 15,000 members of Network Rail's 'orange army' will be working round the clock to improve the network for millions of passengers.

Bridge improvement work on the A453 Tamworth Road between Four Oaks and Sutton Coldfield in Birmingham will mean buses replace trains between Lichfield and Aston on the Sunday until mid-afternoon.

Martin Frobisher, route managing director for Network Rail, said: "Work takes place 365 days a year as part of our Railway Upgrade Plan but we carry out larger upgrades over bank holidays when there are fewer passengers travelling."

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Thorns Primary School
Thorns Road, Quarry Bank
5pm and 7pm
Tel: Lisa 07986 673899

TUESDAY

New Consultant from 6th September

Bromley/Kingswinford
Dingle Community Centre
Madeley Rd
5pm & 7pm
Tel: Jen 07738 398586

New Group from 13th September

Wall Heath
Maidensbridge School
Beechcroft Rd, 7pm
Tel: Jen 07738 398586

Gornal Wood
Hinley Road Methodist Church
Hinley Rd (Large Car Park at rear via Chapel Walk)
9.30am
Tel: Becki 07986 407934

Norton
Gig Mill Primary School
The Broadway, 7pm
Tel: Kelly 07857 244854

Wordsley
Richardson Hall
Gayfield Avenue, 7pm
Tel: Ian 07970 147592

Woodsetton
Bramford Primary School
Park Road, 6pm & 7.45pm
Tel: Louise 07967 624573

Gornal
Zoar Methodist Church
Abbey Rd, 5pm & 7pm
Tel: Bekki 07986 407934

Wollaston
St James C of E Primary School
Kingsway, 7pm
Tel: Jo 07725 987340

Netherton
Cole Street Methodist Church
Cole Street, 9.30am
Tel: Heather 07729 105659

Rowley Regis
Rowley Regis Disability Centre
26 Rowley Village, 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Kenton 07982 408088

Dudley (Wrensnest)
Wrensnest Community Centre
Summer Road, 10am
Tel: Louise 07967 624573

Norton
The Scout Hut, Kempton Way,
Off Heath Farm Rd, 9.30am
Tel: Caroline 01562 888315

Amblecote
Peters Hill Primary School
Peters Hill Rd, 6pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Lynne 01384 455427

WEDNESDAY

Kingswinford
British Legion
Summerhill Rd, 3.30pm; 5pm & 6.30pm
Tel: Ann 07787 186259

Brockmoor
Brockmoor Community Centre
Pensnett Rd, 9.30am & 11.30am
Tel: Ian 01384 827999

Amblecote
Amblecote Primary School
School Drive, 5.30pm & 7.15pm
Tel: Caroline 01562 888315

Netherton
Hill Crest School and Community College
Simmis Lane, 7pm
Tel: Heather 07729 105659

Tivdale
St Michaels Church
Tivdale Rd, 5pm & 7pm
Tel: Kenton 07982 408088

Stourbridge/Oldswinford
St Marys Church Hall
Rectory Road, 4pm; 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Kerry 01384 833812

Brierley Hill
Withymoore Primary School
Gayfield Avenue, 7pm
Tel: Lynne 01384 455427

Lower Gornal
The Straits Primary School
Milton Crescent, 7pm
Tel: Marion 07887 594344

Upper Gornal
Upper Gornal Methodist Church
Spills Meadow, Off Kent St, 9.30am
Tel: Lynn 07963 539384

Dudley/Upper Gornal
Bishop Milner RC School
Burton Rd, 7pm
Tel: Sue 01902 882323

THURSDAY

New Group from 1st September

Oldbury
Portway Lifestyle Centre
Newbury Lane, 7pm
Tel: Claire 07539 950447

New Consultant from 1st September

Cradley
Cradley Liberal Club
Upper High Street
Cradley Heath
5pm & 7pm
Tel: Romina 07432 558596

Tivdale
Orniston Sandwell Community Academy
Lower City Road, 7pm
Tel: Sarah 07875 445462

Dudley
Central Methodist Church
Cross Street, 5pm & 7pm
Tel: Sarah 07837 950797

Pensnett
Community Centre
High Street, 4pm & 6pm
Tel: Gill 01384 830929

Sedgley/Upper Gornal
St Chads and All Saints Social Club
High Holborn, Dudley Rd, 5pm & 7pm
Tel: Sue 01902 882323

Brierley Hill
Nine Locks Community Centre
Hill Street, 9.15am
Tel: Jill 01384 830929

Dudley
Central Methodist Church
Cross Street, 10am & 12 Noon
Tel: Sarah 07837 950797

Hawbush/Brierley Hill
Oakfield Community Centre
Brettell Lane, 5pm & 7pm
Tel: John 07769 690053

Stourbridge
St Thomas Church Hall
Market St, 10am
Tel: John 07769 690053

Stourbridge
Greenfield Primary School
Hill Street, 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Marie 01384 893001

FRIDAY

Sedgley
Sedgley Community Centre
Ladies Walk
(Access via the Priory) 9.30am
Tel: Gareth 07517 675787

Stourbridge
The Bonded Warehouse
Canal Street, 9.30am
Tel: Jo 07725 987340

Kingswinford
St Marys Church Hall
The Village, 8.30am & 10.30am
Tel: Sue 07825 354224

Rowley Regis
Rowley Regis Disability Centre
26 Rowley Village 9.30am
Tel: Kenton 07982 408088

SATURDAY

Lower Gornal
Roberts Primary School
Robert Street, 8.30am & 10.30am
Tel: Sarah 07837 950797

Hawbush/Brierley Hill
Oakfield Community Centre
Brettell Lane, 7.30am; 9.30am & 11.15am
Tel: Jo 07725 987340

Oldbury
Portway Lifestyle Centre
Newbury Lane, 9am & 11am
Tel: Kenton 07982 408088

visit the website to read Emma's story

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The Youlls get kitted out for their adventure

Discovering delights of transformed Scottish city

FOR years Glasgow had a rather dubious reputation. It wasn't the obvious place to take a weekend break, for even though it has always had a wealth of beautiful buildings, museums and art galleries – it was a physically dirty place with a high level of violence.

I first visited the city when a student back in the dark ages but with the protection of the then boyfriend – a Glaswegian. He himself was a little wary of some areas and was a very good guide. Not long after that the city fathers made a determined effort to clean up Scotland's second city and over the years the place has been utterly transformed.

Major changes began in 1988 when it was the third UK city in a series of five to host a fantastic Garden Festival attracting people from not just Scotland or the UK but from many other places in the world. The festival was built on deserted dockland alongside the River Clyde and was something I've remembered ever since I visited. Two years later Glasgow was the European City of Culture and people started to think of it as a destination as a tourist.

Now the place is buzzing. Stylish bars, restaurants and shops offer a great social life along with the sumptuous shopping offered! Live music of all genres is to the fore along with theatre and culture – several top rate museums, a fascinating cathedral and the Gothic Necropolis – it started as an open area to be enjoyed and then became the graveyard of the mainly rich. It sits at the top of a hill overlooking St Mungo's with ornate and magnificent statements of the people lying under the ground or inside the imposing mausoleums dotted around. At twilight with sinister shapes standing stark against the darkening sky it can be quite spooky.

And so where to stay to discover this vibrant city? Just a short taxi ride from Glasgow Central Station (you can also easily walk it) is Blythswood Square Hotel, overlooking Blythswood Square on Blythswood Hill!

The history of the area is fascinating. Blythswood Hill was developed as a result of the westward expansion of the city in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Likened to Edinburgh's New Town, it housed the city's wealthy merchants and

shipping magnates in four (or more) floored Georgian townhouses. The centrepiece of the area is Blythswood Square, which was originally intended by the Georgian architects and planners of the time to be the "new" centre of the city, and, although this is largely true from a geographical standpoint, George Square which fronts the Glasgow City Chambers still remains Glasgow's "official" centre.

Blythswood Hill became infamous as the home of Madeleine Smith, a young woman who in 1857 was tried for the murder of her lover Pierre Emile L'Angelier. Although the verdict was not proven the story scandalised Scottish society, and is recounted in Jack House's 1961 book Square Mile of Murder.

Today, relatively few people live in Blythswood Hill, it is now mainly offices and forming, along with neighbouring Ardrossan, Glasgow's financial district. Perhaps the most attractive building in the area is the hotel which began life in 2009 with the conversion of the former RSAC building by the Town House Company. Now holding five stars, it provides a good location for exploration. And it provides first class service and accommodation. The contemporary rooms feature Italian marble bathrooms, tea and coffee making facilities, satellite TV and free WiFi. Suites add separate lounge areas and espresso machines. The penthouse has a private dining room, free minibar and rooftop terrace.

There's a stylish cocktail bar, and a second offering light meals and an afternoon tea of the very best. The modern restaurant serves a mix of classic and a little off-beat cuisine. Of particular note during my dinner were the scallops – crispy on the outside and just warmed through. Perfection. Oh and there was the stunning dessert and I could go on and on. There's an a la carte menu and an excellent Market Menu.

And now to the award-winning spa where facilities include nine treatment rooms, a thermal suite, two relaxation pools and more. It is a place for ultimate relaxation.

To get to my 'destination' I went with Virgin Trains who offer a regular service. If you book in advance you can get a great deal on first class tickets.

By Sharon Walters



Zippering to Wales for a piece of the action

THREE, two, one... go! And with that all too short countdown and every sense of self-preservation screaming 'don't do it' inside your head, it's time to place your faith in a harness and an inch-thick piece of steel wire.

But by now it's too late. You can't go back. It's time to sit back and enjoy the ride.

The ride in question on this occasion is a huge zipwire down the side of a Welsh mountain.

With butterflies dancing the fandango in your stomach, the metal frame disappears and it is just you, the screech of the zipwire and 100ft of air between you and terra firma below.

And my oh my, what a feeling, what a buzz.

Within a second those initial fears evaporate and the adrenaline rush takes over.

Screaming over an old slate mine in Blaenau Ffestionig you're almost as free as a bird. This is pretty much as close to flying as you can get short of growing wings and taking off. And too soon you reach the bottom of the zipwire. Ear-to-ear smiles spread across the faces of myself, wife and the kids as we are uncoupled from the harnesses attaching us to the wires.

"We have to do that again!" is the consensus. And fortunately, this is Zipworld Titan, and there are another two runs to go before we're at the bottom.

Bring it on.

This four-person zipwire is the first of its kind in Europe with thrill-seekers hitting speeds of up to 70mph.

Believe me, this zip is well worth the trip. But this corner of north Wales is not just about flying through the air, there's plenty going on beneath your feet too.

Not least a trip back in time to experience the gruelling lives of the slate miners' whose endeavours shaped this incredible landscape with its scarred mountainsides and vast subterranean caverns.

And what a life it was for those men. A

HOLIDAYS

By Russell Youll

life lived almost completely in darkness, they worked from dawn till dusk underground, more often than not in the pitch black as candles cost money - and they had to provide their own. It's tough to imagine the life of a slate miner but an underground tour at the Llechwed slate caverns shed some, erm, light on their incredible toil.

Sat cheek-by-jowl with Snowdonia and some of the most stunning landscapes on these islands, Blaenau Ffestionig is a raw reminder of how families once eked a living out of the ground beneath their feet.

And it has its own eerie beauty.

And everywhere around this town are reminders of the graft which saw some 13,000 people drawn to the industry at its height in the 19th century - more than double the current population of the town.

And every piece of rock was put there by hand. The scale is incredible. The sights are stunning.

The Ffestionig Railway follows the route of the slate to the harbour from the mines and, from there, to the roofs of myriad buildings around the world. Now, however, it is part of Snowdonia's new major industry and carries tourists rather than slate.

And what a journey it is. Wending its way along mountainsides it hark back to an era of glamour. Pay the extra for a seat in the first class carriage if you can, it's well worth it - you can almost imagine yourself on a miniature Orient Express as the train chugs towards its destination.

Meanwhile, the Snowdon Mountain Railway makes short work getting to the highest point in Wales.

On a clear day, we're told, you can see England, Ireland and the Isle of Man.

Stunning Snowdonia has so much to offer. Our weekend snapshot was a glimpse leaving us needing to see more.

To return to screech down another zipwire, climb another mountain, ride another train. And soon.



Looking down the zipwire which travels over some of the most breathtaking scenery

Ancient treasures from sunken cities and shipwrecks



Roman portrait heads @ Museo archeologico regionale Paolo Orsi di Siracusa

TREASURES found at the bottom of the sea have this year become the icons of popular archaeology with exhibitions in London and Oxford.

Sunken Cities: Egypt's Lost Worlds has been a major success for the British Museum with artefacts submerged for more than a thousand years seeing the light of day again, while in Oxford at Britain's oldest museum, the Ashmolean, visitors come face to face with Treasures From The Sicilian Seas in Storms, Wars and Shipwrecks.

The British Museum's blockbuster exhibition runs until November 27 (tickets £16.50 adults, under 16s free) and includes huge statues and gold jewellery from the lost cities of Thonis-Heracleion and Canopus. The former was a major Nile port and the latter a centre of wor-

ship for the Egyptian gods, before both sank beneath the Mediterranean.

The exhibition shows how Greek and Egyptian cultures blended in these cities and reveals secrets from the mysterious cult of Osiris, god of the underworld.

The Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology (part of the University of Oxford) has a fascinating display of items recovered from shipwrecks around the Italian island of Sicily.

Most of these treasures have been uncovered over the last 60 years thanks to the advent of SCUBA diving equipment and pioneering diver-archaeologist Honor Frost.

Sicily has long been the crossroads of the Mediterranean, prized and fought over by the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs and Normans.

Merchant and war ships representing all these conquerors have come to grief over the centuries along the island's rugged coast and now yield their secrets.

Highlights include an evocative Greek warrior helmet; the bronze battering rams from a Roman fleet; a 'flat-pack' Byzantine marble church that was part of the Emperor Justinian's campaign to spread Christianity; and stone Roman heads (see picture left) probably from a sculptor's studio, which ended up as ship's ballast.

Storms, Wars and Shipwrecks continues at the Ashmolean until September 25 (tickets £10 adults, half-price children and students, plus other concessions).

For further details see the British Museum and Ashmolean Museum websites.

fast the ticket



King's here
See Page 25



PUP-py power

Canadian rockers have landed
See Page 25



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DAY TRIPS

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Monday 29th August

SOUTHPORT

Adults £17.00 O.A.P £16.00 Child £14.00

Tuesday 30th August

COTSWOLD MARKET & BOURTON ON THE WATER

Adults £15.00 O.A.P £14.00 Child £12.00

BLACKPOOL ILLUMINATIONS

Saturdays 17th September & also 1st October

Start from 8am Ret from Blackpool 9pm

This does not include a tour of the lights by coach

Adults £18.00 O.A.P £16.00 Child £14.00

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T. Rextasy



**Saturday, 9pm
Robin 2, Bilston**

Get It On with Daniel and his spell-binding tribute to Marc Bolan and T Rex, you'll love to boogie to this even if you were not around for the glam rock era.

Visit www.therobin.co.uk

Dirty Jane



**Saturday, 7.30pm
O2 Institute Blue Room, B'ham**

One of Birmingham's noisiest rock bands, with Hednesford trio Dog, Telford's Cavalier Kings and Fleer. Visit www.academymusicgroup.com/o2institutebirmingham/events/855157/dirty-jane-tickets

The Glenn Miller Story



**Until Saturday, various times
New Alexandra Theatre, B'ham**

Veteran song and dance man Tommy Steele gets to play one of his heroes in this musical about the big band leader. Visit www.atgtickets.com/shows/the-glenn-miller-story/new-alexandra-theatre-birmingham

Raghu Dixit



**Wednesday, 7pm
O2 Academy 2, B'ham**

The acclaimed Indian musician, composer and singer-songwriter brings his infectious global music into Brum. Visit www.academymusicgroup.com/o2academybirmingham/events/845875/raghu-dixit-tickets

CLUBBING

Propaganda

Tonight,
O2 Academy Birmingham,
B1 1DB.
Call 0121 622 8250

JAZZ, SOUL, RNB, BLUES AND REGGAE

Up 4 The Downstroke
Tonight and tomorrow,
The Jam House, Birmingham,
B3 1QU.
Call 0121 200 3030

Debbie Bond with Radiator Rick at CARAD & The Speedgums
Tonight,
Rhayader Museum and Gallery,
LD6 5ER.
Call 01597 810561

The Commandments
Tomorrow, £8
The River Rooms, Stourbridge,
DY8 1JN.
Call 01384 397 177 or 07986 577661

Tom Martin Celtic Soul
Tomorrow, £5 and Mon, £5
Tower Of Song, Birmingham,
B30 3EL.
Call 0121 486 1300

Elkie Brooks
Mon, £27.50
Huntingdon Hall, CrownGate,
Worcester, WR1 3LD.
Call 01905 611427

ROCK & METAL

The Replicas
Tonight, £8
The River Rooms, Stourbridge,
DY8 1JN.
Call 01384 397 177
or 07986 577661

Skabucks
Tonight, £6
The RoadHouse Birmingham,
Kings Norton, B30 3DZ.
Call 0121 246 2273

Heronimus Fin
Tonight,
Tower Of Song, Birmingham,
B30 3EL. Call 0121 486 1300

Queensryche
Tonight, £20 - £22.50
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

Ozzy OzzSpawn & Disarm Goliath
Tomorrow, £6 - £7
The RoadHouse Birmingham,
Kings Norton, B30 3DZ.
Call 0121 246 2273

T. Rextasy - 'Get It On'
Tomorrow, £13 - £15
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

The Undertones
Tomorrow,
The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent,
ST1 1DR.
Call 01782 214991

Oasis v The Stone Roses
Sun, £8
The River Rooms, Stourbridge,
DY8 1JN.
Call 01384 397177
or 07986 577661

Tommy Hunt & The Edwin Starr Band featuring Angelo Starr & Johnny Boy Pryers & Lorraine Silver
Sun - £22 - £24
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

Crowded Scouse - 'Woodface'
Thu, £10 - £12
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

POP

Thank ABBA For The Music
Tonight, £19.50 - £22.50
Huntingdon Hall, CrownGate,
Worcester, WR1 3LD.
Call 01905 611427

Michael Buble tribute
Tomorrow,
Genting Club Star City,
Birmingham, B7 5SA.
Call 0121 3278008

The Simon & Garfunkel Story
Thu at 8pm,
Artrix, Bromsgrove, B60 1PQ.
Call 01527 577330

FOLK, COUNTRY & ACOUSTIC

Quill
Thu,
MAC, Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

CLASSICAL

CBSO and Mirga at the BBC Proms
Tomorrow,
CBSO Centre, Birmingham,
B1 2LF.
Call 0121 616 6500

Stourport Choral Society
Wed,
Areley Kings Village Hall, Areley Common, Stourport-on-Severn,
DY13 0NB. Call 07939 318973

COMEDY

Will-E 'One Man' Special
Sun,
6 on Broad Street, Birmingham,
B1 2HF. Call 0121 632 4936

Sarah Millican: Outsider
Mon, £25
Symphony Hall, The International Convention Centre, Birmingham,
B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

Jason Manford 'Best of'
Mon, £19.50
Oakengates Theatre,
Telford, TF2 6EP.
Call 01952 382382

Joe Pasquale
Wed,
Lichfield Garrick,
WS13 6HR.
Call 01543 412121

Laugh Out Loud Comedy Club at The Regent Theatre
Tomorrow, Free entry
Fenton Manor Sports Complex,
Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 2RR.
Call 01782 233222

THEATRE

The Glenn Miller Story
Tonight and tomorrow,
New Alexandra Theatre,
Birmingham, B5 4DS.
Call 0844 871 3011

Malvern Theatres Young Company: Seussical The Musical
Tonight and tomorrow,
Malvern Theatres, WR14 3HB.
Call 01684 892277

Inside the Story: 3D books
Tue, £2
Ludlow Assembly Rooms,
SY8 1AZ.
Call 01584 878141

The Dreamboys
Thu,
New Alexandra Theatre,
Birmingham, B5 4DS.
Call 0844 871 3011

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Thu,
The Birmingham Botanical Gardens & Glasshouses,
Edgbaston, B15 3TR.
Call 0121 454 1860

One Show More
Various, free entry
Fenton Manor Sports Complex,
Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 2RR.
Call 01782 233222

MUSEUMS, GALLERIES & DAYS OUT

Art Explorer Friday
Today,
Ikon Gallery, Birmingham,
B1 2HS.
Call 0121 248 0708

Wild art activity day
Today,
Croome Court, Worcester,
WR8 9DW.
Call 01905 371006

The Big Read: Story-time Trail
Tomorrow,
Soho House, Birmingham,
B18 5LB.
Call 0121 554 9122

First World War at Croft
Tomorrow,
Croft Castle and Parkland,
Yarpole, HR6 9PW.
Call 01568 782120

Newcomen Engine in Steam
Tomorrow - Mon,
The Black Country Living Museum,
Dudley,
DY1 4SQ.
Call 01215579643

Drakelow Tunnels Ghost Hunt with Spooky Nights
Sun, £18
Drakelow Tunnels, Wolverley and Cookley.
Call 0203 239 8075

Sunday Guided Tours
Sun, £3
Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, B3 3DH.
Call 0121 303 1966

Open Studio: Life Drawing & Painting
Sun,
MAC, Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

Hidden Stories Ramble
Sun,
Clent Hills, B62 0NL.
Call 01562 712 822

Boulton goes to Bollywood
Mon,
Soho House, Birmingham,
B18 5LB.
Call 0121 554 9122

Knights & Princesses - Bank Holiday Event
Mon - Thu,
Hartlebury Castle, Kidderminster,
DY11 7XZ.
Call 01299 251890

Flea Fair
Mon,
Three Counties Showground,
Malvern, WR13 6NW.
Call 01684 584924

Whyley Dance
Tue
Areley Kings Village Hall, Areley Common, Stourport-on-Severn,
DY13 0NB.
Call 07939 318973

Sarasin & Partners National Fine Art Open
Tue,
Weston Park,
Weston-under-Lizard, Shifnal,
TF11 8LE.
Call 01952 852100

Make a code breaker
Tue, £2
Blakesley Hall Museum, Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8RN.
Call 0121 464 2193

Wild Storytelling - Ellesmere
Tue,
Shropshire Wildlife Trust,
Shrewsbury, SY2 6AH.
Call 01743 284280

Great Fire of London Week
Tue - Thu,
Blakesley Hall Museum,
Yardley, Birmingham,
B25 8RN.
Call 0121 464 2193

Summer Holiday Tile Decorating Workshops
Today, £5
The Ironbridge Gorge Museums,
Coalbrookdale, TF8 7DQ.
Call 01952 433 424

Rainbows
Wed,
Areley Kings Village Hall, Areley Common, Stourport-on-Severn,
DY13 0NB.
Call 07939 318973

Storytelling in the Courtyard
Wed,
Aston Hall, Birmingham, B6 6JD.
Call 0121 675 4722

Family craft activity: Hand Print Beasts
Wed, £1
Aston Hall, Birmingham, B6 6JD.
Call 0121 675 4722

Historical Talk Series. David & Pam Humphries - BCT, The Coffin Works and Beyond
Wed,
Gunmakers Arms pub,
Birmingham, B4 6HG.

Storytelling picnic with Sal Tonge at Dolerw Park
Wed, £3
Oriol Davies Gallery, The Park,
Newtown, SY16 2NZ.
Call 01686 625041

Wild Storytelling - Ludlow
Wed,
Shropshire Wildlife Trust,
Shrewsbury, SY2 6AH.
Call 01743 284280

Chance to Dance
Thu,
Areley Kings Village Hall, Areley Common, Stourport-on-Severn,
DY13 0NB.
Call 07939 318973

Graham Colling - Granary Art Gallery
Thu,
Weston Park,
Weston-under-Lizard, Shifnal,
TF11 8LE.
Call 01952 852100

Wild Storytelling - Shrewsbury
Thu,
Shropshire Wildlife Trust,
Shrewsbury, SY2 6AH.
Call 01743 284280

MISC. EVENTS

Wildcraft: The Outdoor Adventure for Video Gamers
Today,
Chirk Castle, LL14 5AF.
Call 01691 777701

Check out full listings in **the ticket** in Friday's Express & Star

Power PUP as punks grow up

CANADIAN punky pow-pop outfit PUP are promising a blistering show in Birmingham, following the release of their new album *The Dream Is Over*.

The album's title is a riposte to the doctor who told singer and guitarist Stefan Babcock those very words when a cyst was found on his vocal chords.

Some wear and tear was not surprising after the Toronto quartet had played 450 shows over two years in support of the band's self-titled debut album.

But *The Dream Is Over* is very much an affirmation that the dream is still alive. It's brattish blasts of angry nerd rock, fuelled by self-loathing, youthful angst and the desire to escape a small town existence, show that the 20-something rockers haven't lost their mojo... and their lead singer delivers a full-voiced 'up yours' to bleak medical advice.

Touring

Stand out tracks include the anthemic *Pine Point* and *Old Wounds*, while *Can't Win, My Life is Over* & *I Couldn't Be Happier*, and *If This Tour Doesn't Kill You, I Will* mixes loathing and self-deprecation.

Babcock says: "I think that a lot of people in their mid-20s start to feel this sense of disillusionment, realising that maybe life isn't going to turn out exactly as you'd pictured it."

"I love touring and playing music more than anything in the world. But there's also this realisation that maybe the romanticised vision of this



Canadian band PUP are growing up on the road, as heard on their new album

lifestyle I'd imagined ten years ago has little or no relation to the actual experience - waking up in a Walmart parking lot in a van full of dudes and thinking I'm 27, broke and lonely. That's where a lot of these songs come from.

"I think most people eventually

experience that resignation, that acceptance of real life with all its imperfections. It's called growing up."

PUP, who also feature guitarist Steve Sladkowski, bassist Nestor Chumak and drummer Zack Mykula, are in concert at The Rainbow, in Digbeth, Birmingham, on Tuesday.

Knight will play a king

SIR Antony Sher (pictured left) takes on what many regard the 'Mount Everest of roles' when he plays King Lear, which opened this week at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon.

But 24 'extras', including amateur actors from Birmingham, Solihull and Warwickshire, will also be taking part in the landmark production which runs at Stratford until October 15 and will be screened live in selected cinemas on October 12.

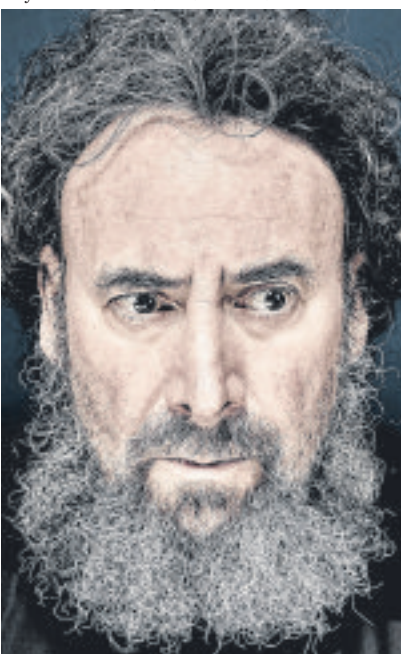
Directed by Royal Shakespeare Company Artistic Director Gregory Doran, the production will transfer to London in November.

Sir Antony's first Shakespeare role with the RSC was as The Fool in *King Lear* in the early 1980s, before he made his name with his celebrated portrayal of Richard III. He has gone on to play *Macbeth*, *Falstaff*, *Iago*, *Malvolio*, *Prospero* and *Shylock* for the RSC. His screen roles have included *Disraeli* in *Mrs Brown*, *Dr Moth* in *Shakespeare in Love* and *Glickman* in TV thriller *The Shadow Line*.

One of Shakespeare's most celebrate plays, *King Lear* has an aging monarch aiming to live out his days without the burden of power. He shares his kingdom between his children but regrets his decision and has to confront his mistakes.

Written around 1605/06, *King Lear* is considered as one of Shakespeare's great tragedies.

RSC productions of *King Lear* have included many famous actors in the title role, including acting knights John Gielgud, Michael Redgrave, Robert Stephens, Donald Sinden, Nigel Hawthorne, Michael Gambon and Ian McKellen.



Festival style gig at Brum pub venue

SEE six bands for a tenner (if you buy in advance) at Birmingham pub venue the Hare and Hounds on Sunday.

The gig from 4pm to 2am at the Kings Heath High Street venue will be headlined by California art rock twin duo The Garden and Madrid trio The Parrots. Plus, from Brum, come punk duo Table Scraps, rock band Sunshine Frisbee Laserbeam, garage rockers The Castilians, and The Mothers Earth Experiment's psychedelic jazz.

In the H&H's other room that night is reggae band Kioko with a DJ set from Jerry Dammers. See www.hareandhoundskingheath.co.uk for details.

Camper Calling to pop under canvas

THE festival season continues this weekend with Camper Calling, the three-day family festival that blends music and camping at Ragley Hall in Warwickshire.

1980s favourites ABC, who this year released the long-awaited sequel to their 1982 classic album *The Lexicon of Love*, will top the bill in the grounds of the mansion near Alcester. Also on the bill are The Magic Numbers, The Hoosiers, Toploader, Dodgy, plus tribute acts and circus shows.

Tickets range from £10 for a day pass to £62.50 for the weekend. Visit www.campercalling.com or call 01244 881895.

Casino memories as fans keep faith

THE major Northern Soul event at Bilston this Sunday is going ahead despite the absence of soul legend Dean Parrish.

The New Yorker, famous for Wigan Casino classic *I'm On My Way*, has had to pull out of the soul nostalgia line-up at the Robin 2 because he had to undergo an emergency operation.

However, there is still lots for fans to enjoy with Tommy Hunt, Lorraine Silver and Johnny Boy Pryors joining The Edwin Starr Band led by the late Motown singer's brother Angelo. Plus former Casino DJs including Russ Winstanley. Tickets cost £22 advance (£24 door) with dancing from 5pm to midnight.



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SUN 11th SEPT

AS FEATURED IN  **Express & Star** 

CHOICE



Victoria (ITV, 9pm)
New series. In 1838, at the age of 18, young princess Alexandrina's life is transformed when she ascends the throne of Great Britain and becomes Queen Victoria. As monarch in her own right, the young Victoria suddenly finds herself freed of the repressive shackles placed on her by her mother's advisor, Conroy, and builds a new alliance with the charismatic prime minister Lord Melbourne. However, her inexperience makes her susceptible to mistakes – and ultimately scandal. Period drama, starring Jenna Coleman.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.30** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** BBC News. **10.00** Sunday Morning Live. **11.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News: Weather. **1.15** Escape to the Continent. (R) **2.15** Summer: Earth's Seasonal Secrets. (R) **3.15** Eat Well for Less? (R) **4.15** The Great British Bake Off. (R) **5.15** Songs of Praise. **5.50** Pointless Celebrities. (R) **6.35** BBC News. **6.50** Regional Programme. **7.00** Countryfile. Joe Crowley meets a tenant farmer to see what sort of problem he faces working on the World Heritage Site of Stonehenge, while Anita Rani visits reconstructions of neolithic houses. Including weather for the week ahead. **8.00** Antiques Roadshow. New series. Fiona Bruce presents the show from Tewkesbury Abbey, Gloucestershire, where a collection of rare figures and dolls turns out to be a find of national importance. **9.00** Are You Being Served? Young Mr Grace seeks to modernise the department store. Remake of the celebrated sitcom, starring Sherrie Hewson, Jason Watkins, John Challis and Mathew Horne. Part of the Landmark Comedy Sitcom season. **9.30** Porridge. Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais' updated version of their prison comedy, starring Kevin Bishop as the grandson of wily old lag Fletcher. With Ralph Ineson and Mark Bonnar. Part of the Landmark Comedy Sitcom season. **10.00** BBC News. **10.20** Regional Programme. **10.30** Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman reviews the latest Premier League action, featuring Manchester City v West Ham United at the Etihad Stadium and West Bromwich Albion v Middlesbrough at the Hawthorns. **11.25** Comedy Connections. The story behind department store-based sitcom Are You Being Served? The programme reveals how Joanna Lumley and a Piccadilly shop inspired the much-loved series. (R) **11.55** Comedy Connections. The story behind prison-based sitcom Porridge. (R) **12.25** Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.30** BBC News.

BBC2

6.15 The A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **7.00** Glorious Gardens from Above. (R) **7.45** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.15** Countryfile. (R) **9.15** The Beechgrove Garden. **9.45** Saturday Kitchen Best Bits. (R) **11.15** Lorraine Pascale: How to Be a Better Cook. (R) **11.45** James Martin: Home Comforts. (R) **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** Athletics: Diamond League Highlights. **2.00** Film: None But the Brave. (1965) Second World War adventure, starring Frank Sinatra. **3.45** Flog It! (R) **4.30** Kate Humble: My Sheepdog and Me. (R) **5.30** The Great British Bake Off: An Extra Slice. (R) **6.00** Highlands: Scotland's Wild Heart. Following the efforts being made by scientists, conservationists and local people in the Highlands as they work to repair the damage of the past and rebuild wild landscapes and habitats. The programme meets Dave Anderson from Forestry Commission Scotland and his colleague Simon Smith as they tag and monitor red kite and osprey chicks, gaining a unique perspective of the lives of the birds before they fly the nest. Cameras also capture the efforts of the Scottish Wildcat Action Plan team, as well as Paul Lister's project to reintroduce wolves and bears to his Alladale Wilderness Reserve. Last in the series. (R) **7.00** Cats v Dogs: Which Is Best? In the second of two programmes, poodles and pussies are tested in training skills, independence and their capacity for love. Presented by Chris Packham and Liz Bonnin. (R) **8.00** Robot Wars. Dara O Briain and Angela Scanlon present the final, featuring the five heat winners and one of the runners-up. Last in the series. **9.00** Dragons' Den. A merchant navy officer-turned-product designer demonstrates his tablet holder, and two proud parents pitch their organic skincare product for babies. Presented by Evan Davis. **10.00** Fleabag. Dumped by her emotionally fragile boyfriend, Fleabag attempts to rekindle romantic fires to distract her from the mayhem of her life. **10.30** Murder in Successville. **11.00** Film: Up There. (2012) **12.15** Film: Coco Chanel & Igor Stravinsky. (2009) **2.05** Sign Zone: Holy City. (R) **3.05** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.55** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.00** Sooty. (R) **7.15** Super 4. (R) **7.35** Thunderbirds Go Go. (R) **8.00** Ninjago: Rise of the Snakes. (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **10.15** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.15** Film: Columbo: Troubled Waters. (1975) **1.15** ITV News: Weather. **1.20** Long Lost Family. (R) **2.25** The Chase. (R) **3.25** The X Factor. (R) **4.55** Film: Despicable Me. (2010) Animated comedy, with the voice of Steve Carell. **6.35** Regional Programme: Weather. **6.45** ITV News: Weather. **7.00** Ellie Simmonds: Swimming with Dolphins. The gold-medal winning Paralympic swimmer takes a break from training regime to conquer her fear of the open ocean and fulfil her childhood dream of swimming with wild dolphins. **8.00** The X Factor. Dermot O'Leary presents as the opening weekend auditions continue. **9.00** Victoria. New series. Period drama, charting the 18-year-old Queen Victoria's struggle to mature into a formidable ruler capable of building an empire. **10.35** ITV News: Weather. **10.50** Slow Train Through Africa with Griff Rhys Jones. The comedian makes five train journeys taking in the spectacular sights of Africa, travelling to unexpected places in deserts and forests, villages and cities, and finding out how the railways are used today. On the fourth leg of his journey across the continent, Griff travels across Namibia in the south-west, experiencing luxury camping, encountering cheetahs, and visiting 1,000-foot sand dunes. (R) **11.45** Tipping Point. Game show, hosted by Ben Shephard, in which contestants answer questions to win turns on an arcade-style machine. Dropping tokens down a choice of four chutes, they hope to knock piles of them off a moving shelf - and the more they collect, the greater the prize fund. The player who has won the least amount is then eliminated, and the last one standing competes for a £10,000 jackpot. (R) **12.45** Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

7.30 Frasier. (R) **8.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **8.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **9.00** Sunday Brunch. **12.00** Formula 1: Belgian Grand Prix Live. Coverage of the 13th round of the season (Start-time 1.00pm). **4.00** Guy Martin's Passion for Life. (R) **4.30** Location, Location, Location. (R) **5.35** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. **6.35** Channel 4 News. **7.00** Posh Pawn. James Constantinou sets sail on the high seas in a historic boat, the owner of which is seeking £750,000 to fulfil his dream of becoming a well-known children's author. Meanwhile, Lawrence is tasked with selling an original Kerry Darlington painting for a memorable returning client, and Essex girl Lucy needs an urgent loan to pay for her mother's funeral, and seeks to secure the money she requires using a diamond ring that has been in her family for generations. **8.00** Prehistoric Mega Beasts: Croc v Snake. Documentary investigating the unexpected discoveries made during a mining operation in Cerrejón, northern Colombia, where excavations have uncovered evidence of a prehistoric world filled with giant creatures. The largest of these was the titanoa, a 43-foot snake that appeared to be unmatched in either size or strength. However, further findings in the region indicate that the titanoa's supremacy may have been challenged by a giant crocodilian creature, and scientists conduct a close examination of fossilised remains to determine which of the two ruled this ancient animal kingdom. **9.00** The Big Fat Quiz of Everything. Noel Fielding, Eddie Izzard, Alan Carr, Chelsea Peretti, Romesh Ranganathan and Dara O Briain are quizzed by Jimmy Carr on the past 100,000 years of history, with topics ranging from politics to pop music, fashion to film and art to animals. Jimmy is aided by regulars Jan Snow, the children of Mitchell Brook Primary School and Joey Essex, as well as a whole host of famous question setters. Last in the series. **10.35** Film: The Watch. (2012) **12.40** Formula 1: Belgian Grand Prix Highlights. **1.40** Friday Night Dinner. (R) **2.05** Walking the Himalayas. (R) **3.00** Location, Location, Location. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **6.15** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.30** Bob the Builder. (R) **6.40** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **6.50** Zack and Quack. (R) **7.05** Pets. (R) **7.10** Noddy in Toyland. (R) **7.20** Paw Patrol. **7.35** Little Princess. (R) **7.50** Pip Ahoy! (R) **8.10** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.35** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.50** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.15** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.30** LazyTown. (R) **9.55** The Fairly OddParents. **10.30** Football on 5: The Championship. (R) **11.30** Football on 5: Goal Rush. (R) **12.05** Access. (R) **12.10** Now That's Funny! (R) **1.10** Film: Are We There Yet? (2005) Family comedy, starring Ice Cube. **3.00** Cats Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **4.00** Dogs Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **5.00** Pets Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **6.00** Cats Make You Laugh Out Loud 2. Dave Spikely and Zoe Lyons introduce videos from the internet featuring animals doing funny and humorous things, with the first edition focusing on cats. (R) **7.00** Toddlers Make You Laugh Out Loud 2. Compilation of internet videos featuring children doing bizarre and humorous things. **8.00** Can't Pay? Benefits Special. The agents grapple with emotional evictions and moral dilemmas, focusing on people who have fallen into debt and those tasked with recovering the money. (R) **8.55** 5 News Weekend. **9.00** The Most Shocking Moments of the 00s. Key moments and clips from the decade, featuring Justin Bieber's antics, Lady Gaga's meat dress and Britney Spears' meltdown. Reality TV programmes come to the fore, including George Galloway's turn as a cat in Celebrity Big Brother which shocked the nation, to Katie Price and Peter Andre's love affair on I'm a Celebrity! Featuring contributions from Louis Walsh, Liz McAlarnon, Shaun Ryder and Bez, Matt Richardson, Jimmy Bullard, Nish Kumar, Sinitta, Kerry Katona and Kate Lawler. **11.55** Tattoo Disasters UK. The stories of more people who regret tattoos and are taking steps to get them removed, including a make-up artist who has one dedicated to friends he no longer sees. (R) **12.50** Lip Sync Battle: Walking Dead Special. **1.15** SuperCasino. **3.10** Suspects: The Enemy Within. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 BBC Proms 2016: Barenboim Conducts the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra **9.30** Sounds of the Eighties **10.00** Eisteddfod 2016 with Will Gompertz **10.30** Billy Glyro at Reading Festival 2016 **12.00** Guilar Heroes at the BBC **1.00** Horizon: Playing God **2.00** 10 Things You Didn't Know About Tsunamis **3.00** Sounds of the Eighties **3.25** Close **ITV2** **12.00** The X Factor **1.30** The Xtra Factor Live **2.30** You've Been Framed! **Gold 3.00** Film: Charlotte's Web (2006) **4.00** FYI Daily **4.05** Film: Charlotte's Web (2006) **4.55** Film: Bean (1997) **5.55** FYI Daily **6.00** Film: Bean (1997) **6.45** Film: The Incredible Hulk (2008) **7.45** FYI Daily **7.50** Film: The Incredible Hulk (2008) **9.00** The Xtra Factor Live **10.00** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.25** Bordertown **12.50** Film: Keith Lemon: The Film (2012) **1.50** FYI Daily **1.55** Film: Keith Lemon: The Film (2012) **2.30** Teleshopping **ITV3** **11.00** Goodnight Mister Tom **1.10** Lewis **5.10** Film: Anne of Green Gables (2015) **7.00** Midsummer Murders **9.00** The Investigator: A British Crime Story **1.05** Wire in the Blood **3.45** May the Best House Win **5.30** Rising Damp **5.55** ITV3 Nightscreen **ITV4** **5.45** Silverstone Classic **6.45** British Touring Cars - Crashes and Smashes **7.00** Cycling: Vuelta a Espana **8.00** Mr Bean **9.00** Film: Resident Evil (2002) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10** Film: Resident Evil (2002) **11.10** Film: Don't Say a Word (2001) **12.15** FYI Daily **12.20** Film: Don't Say a Word (2001) **1.25** Highway Patrol **1.45** Cycling: Vuelta a Espana **2.55** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping **E4** **12.00** Coach Trip: Road to Ibiza **2.35** The Goldbergs **4.30** Film: ParaNorman (2012) **6.20** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **10.30** Tattoo Fixers on Holiday **11.30** Gogglebox **1.05** Containment **2.05** New Girl **2.30** First Dates **3.25** Hollyoaks **Film4** **11.00** Honey, I Shrink the Kids (1989) **1.00** Ice Age: Continental Drift (2012) **2.45** Rio (2011) **4.35** Tooth Fairy (2010) **6.45** GI Joe: The Rise of Cobra (2009) **9.00** X-Men: First Class (2011) **11.35** Insidious (2010) **1.40** Insidious: Chapter 2 (2013) **3.55** Close

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FIVE MINUTES FROM MERRY HILL

FILM CHOICES

MONDAY

Thor: The Dark World, BBC1, 8.30pm

The alien thunder god returns to Earth when a powerful weapon from the dawn of time is discovered. The device attracts the attention of an old enemy of his people, who intends to use it to plunge the universe into darkness – and to stop him, Thor must form an uneasy alliance with his treacherous brother Loki. Superhero adventure sequel, starring Chris Hemsworth, Tom Hiddleston and Natalie Portman. (2013)

Schindler's List, Channel 5, 10pm

During the Second World War, German businessman Oskar Schindler strives to save Jews destined for the concentration camps by employing them in his factory – an act of mercy made possible by a deal struck with a sadistic German commandant. Steven Spielberg's Oscar-winning drama, starring Liam Neeson, Ben Kingsley and Ralph Fiennes. (1993)



Thor: The Dark World, Monday, BBC1, 8.30pm

WEDNESDAY

DOA, BBC1, 11.45pm

A burned-out college professor is accused of murdering his wife's lover, and tries to cope by going on an all-night drinking binge – but wakes to discover someone has slipped him a fatal poison, leaving him with just 24 hours to find his would-be killer. Remake of the 1950 thriller, with Dennis Quaid. (1988)

THURSDAY

Shine, BBC1, 11.30pm

Biopic of Australian prodigy David Helfgott, the talented but fragile pianist who suffered a nervous breakdown and battled years of mental illness, along with the pressures of an overbearing father obsessed with success. Overcoming the psychological damage, he succeeded in putting his life back together and eventually settled in a loving relationship. Starring Geoffrey Rush and Armin Mueller-Stahl. (1996)

FRIDAY

Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason, ITV, 10.40pm

The hapless journalist's new romance looks set to be short-lived when she ends up serving time in a Thai prison. Comedy sequel, starring Renee Zellweger, Colin Firth and Hugh Grant. (2004)

Will Home be where the heart is for Neil?

It's 60 years since Hancock's Half Hour made the leap from the radio to the small screen, and in the process became British TV's first great home-grown sitcom.

And that's all the excuse the BBC needed to launch a new season celebrating the genre, and looking back at some of the other much-loved comedies that have amused us over the years.

This week alone there are new versions of Are You Being Served, Porridge and Goodnight Sweetheart (as well as a prequel to Keeping Up Appearances entitled Young Hyacinth), while we'll also soon be seeing new casts recreate the scripts for 'lost' episodes of Step by Step and Son, Till Death Us Do Part and the aforementioned Hancock's Half Hour.

But if that's left you wondering where the much-loved classic sitcoms of tomorrow are going to come from, never fear – BBC Two is out to prove that the genre is still in rude health with a string of pilots, including tonight's Home from Home.

On paper, all the new one-offs look

promising – Peep Show's Paterson Joseph and Robert Webb are starring in The Coopers vs The Rest and Our Ex Wife respectively, while award-winning stand-up comedian James Acaster is behind We the Jury.

Motherland practically groans with class, as its writers include Graham Linehan (Father Ted and The IT Crowd) and Sharon Horgan (Catastrophe, Pulling).

However, as seasoned sitcom watchers know, no matter how good the pedigrees of everyone involved, sometimes a comedy also needs that little bit of extra unpredictable magic to succeed.

So, let's all keep our fingers crossed for Home From Home, which stars a couple of actors who know a thing or two about crowd-pleasing sitcoms – Johnny Vegas, who has logged in plenty of hours by the pool in ITV's Benidorm, and Joanna Page, aka the female half of Gavin & Stacey.

They star as married couple Neil and Fiona Hackett, who, after years of scrimping and saving, have finally made their long-cherished dream of

owning a lodge in the Lake District a reality.

At first it seems that their 'traditional' lodge at Lake View Holiday Park has been worth all the hard work and sacrifices – but that's before they meet their new neighbours, Robert (Adam James) and Penny Dillon (Emilia Fox).

Robert is outdoorsy, while Penny is glamorous and louche, and Neil can't help feeling that the Dillons are superior to the Hacketts in every way.

Fiona is willing to put any feelings of inferiority to one side and join their new neighbours for a 'getting to know you' barbecue, but her husband is less convinced.

However, when the sangria starts flowing, it seems that everyone loosens up – which may not be a good idea as Neil commits the ultimate faux pas...

It remains to be seen whether Home From Home will be so successful that someone will be recreating it in 2078, but here's hoping it gets to become a series.



Home from Home, Tuesday, BBC2, 10pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

Great British Menu

BBC2, 7.30pm

New series. The culinary competition returns with chefs battling it out for the opportunity to cook at a banquet held at the Palace of Westminster celebrating ordinary Britons honoured by the Queen, with the contenders being challenged to showcase contemporary cuisine and demonstrate the transformation in British food during Elizabeth II's reign. The contest begins with entrants all representing Scotland for the first time, with Adam Handling, Michael Bremner and Ally McGrath preparing their starters.

Celebrity Home Secrets

ITV, 8pm

New series. Famous faces revisit their former homes to share their memories and secrets from when they lived there, beginning with actor Nigel Havers. He goes to the London flat where he lived when he got his first professional job aged 15, and where Mick Jagger and Keith Richards attended a celebratory party in 1967 after Nigel's father Michael Havers QC represented them at the Court of Appeal. He also goes to the basement flat in Fulham where he was living when he got his first big break in BBC mini-series A Horseman Riding By.

TUESDAY

New York: America's Busiest City

BBC2, 9pm

New series. Ade Adepitan, Anita Rani, Ant Anstead and Dan Snow take a closer look at one of the most complex and powerful cities in the world, focusing on transport links in the first edition. Anita, Ade and Ant head to Grand Central Terminal, joining the daily commute on the iconic Staten Island ferry as well as the subway, suburban railroad and citi bikes. Dan visits Times Square to see how the 230 LED advertising hoardings are maintained, while Ade takes a ride in a yellow cab, discovering that the business model is under threat from newly created taxi apps.

WEDNESDAY

All Star Mr & Mrs

ITV, 8pm

There may be tougher quizzes, but few that have quite so much potential to provoke a previously happy couple into having a row on national TV. So, we should be impressed that ITV have found enough celebrities ready

to prove how much (or how little) they know about their other halves to make a new series. Clearly, the chance to win £30,000 for their chosen charity is a big incentive. The first famous faces to take the plunge are Emmerdale's Adam Thomas and his fiancée Caroline Daly. Strictly dancers Kevin and

Karen Clifton and Dad's Army star Ian Lavender and his wife Michele Hardy. As ever, Phillip Schofield will be asking the questions, but hopefully he won't have to act as referee as well.

THURSDAY

Ingenious Animals

BBC1, 8pm

New series. Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall and a team of wildlife experts travel the globe in search of the most surprising animal stories and reveal how and why animals do such remarkable things. The first episode explores the world of animal intelligence, with Hugh visiting Florida to investigate an unexpected relationship



Great British Menu, Monday, BBC2, 7.30pm

between an alligator and a manatee, which has animal intelligence experts baffled. Plus, conservationist Giles Clark finds out if elephants can feel empathy – one of the most sophisticated forms of emotional intelligence.

FRIDAY

Would I Lie to You?

BBC1, 8.30pm

New series. The comedy panel show makes a welcome return, with the hotseat once again occupied by Welsh comedian Rob Brydon. This opening instalment of the tenth series sees team captains David Mitchell and Lee Mack joined by guests Bake Off co-host Mel Giedroyc, heavyweight boxer David Haye, actor-musician Martin Kemp and comedian Romesh Ranganathan. As usual, the participants aim to hoodwink their opponents with absurd facts and plausible lies about themselves in a bid to secure a team victory and the dubious honour of being dubbed the liar of the week.

Lady C and the Castle

ITV, 9pm

The restoration of Castle Goring in Sussex, which was derelict when purchased by Lady Colin Campbell, who had plans to transform it into an upmarket venue for weddings and events.

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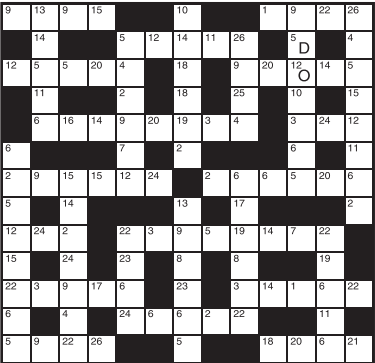
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BRAIN GYM No.392

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:
I X N M R F Y S V Q E H J
P O W K U T D A G L Z B C

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

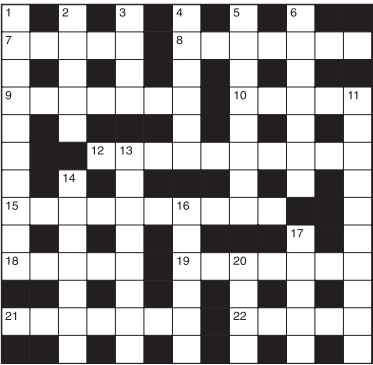
Cryptic Clues:

Across

- 7. Is about to study pictures (5)
- 8. Its quarters are hardly spotless (7)
- 9. Hands over and retires (5,2)
- 10. The hump in the middle of bridges (5)
- 12. Correctly positioned climbers are well advised to take it! (5,3,2)
- 15. Get to grips, but in friendly fashion (5,5)
- 18. Delay and yield to another's wishes (5)
- 19. In a suit designed for a hot country (7)
- 21. A facial expression - a sinister one (7)
- 22. Cultivated Scandinavian (5)

Down

- 1. Died with heart strain - in great pain? (10)
- 2. One will be anxious to do it (5)
- 3. Goddess is repeatedly put down (4)
- 4. Embrace that really fixes things (6)
- 5. Having got more on loan, you end up in debt (8)
- 6. There are thirty-one of these distress calls (7)
- 11. Fresh sand, please, for use by the sea (10)
- 13. Sweet rice came out of it (3-5)
- 14. A month, just, in London (7)
- 16. The country girl (6)
- 17. Remains precisely how he is (5)
- 20. Egg production centre (4)



Quick Clues:

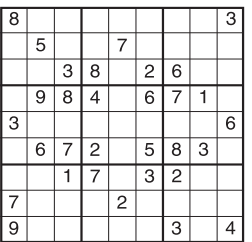
Across

- 7. Smell (5)
- 8. Stamp (7)
- 9. Curtain (7)
- 10. Cold (5)
- 12. Trial place (5,2,3)
- 15. Vivacity (10)
- 18. Shoot (5)
- 19. Windpipe (7)
- 21. Coach (7)
- 22. Shelf (5)

Down

- 1. Policemen (10)
- 2. Machine (5)
- 3. Annoying child (4)
- 4. Victor (6)
- 5. Roomy (8)
- 6. Readable (7)
- 11. Criminal (3-7)
- 13. Considerate (8)
- 14. Exceeded (7)
- 16. Essence (6)
- 17. Rebuke (5)
- 20. Skilled (4)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

3	4	9	7	1	8	5	6	2
7	5	1	9	3	2	4	8	3
8	6	2	4	3	5	9	1	7
4	3	6	1	7	9	2	5	8
2	7	8	3	5	4	1	9	6
9	1	5	8	2	6	3	7	4
1	6	3	2	5	7	6	4	5
6	9	7	5	4	3	8	2	1
5	2	4	6	8	1	7	3	9

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Bean-feast; 8 Ion; 9 Army canteen; 11 Penalty; 12 Drear; 13 Little; 15 People; 17 Cabot; 18 Sea-salt; 20 On one's knees; 22 Ark; 23 Falsehood. Down: 2 Ear; 3 Focal; 4 Annoys; 5 Treadle; 6 Dinner plate; 7 Insurgent; 10 Minute-books; 11 Policeman; 14 Lets off; 16 As well; 19 Ankle; 21 Ego. QUICK - Across: 1 Elemental; 8 Rub; 9 Determinate; 11 Immerse; 12 Scour; 13 Breach; 15 Invite; 17 Learn; 18 Appear; 20 Educational; 22 Can; 23 Tasteless. Down: 2 Lie; 3 Error; 4 Told; 5 Liaison; 6 Premonition; 7 Abhorrent; 10 Temperament; 11 Imbalance; 14 Conduct; 16 Harass; 19 Pride; 21 Ass.

Thinking space

Quiz

- 1. Which bird has golden and argus varieties?
- 2. Which Scottish group had a No. 1 hit single in 1992 with Goodnight Girl?
- 3. In which constellation is Deneb the brightest star?
- 4. After which French city is denim named?
- 5. Which supermodel 'wrote' the novel Swan?
- 6. Of which place was Baron Hailsham baron?
- 7. Of what is a magneto a simple example?
- 8. In which US city is the Grand Old Opry?
- 9. Who succeeded John Monks as general secretary of the TUC in 2003?
- 10. What sort of creature is a loon?

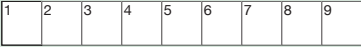
Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Fu Manchu; 2 Tenerife; 3 Treasure Island; 4 The atomic bomb; 5 M; 6 Archbishop of York; 7 Richard Burton; 8 Crows; 9 Boxing; 10 John Cleese. Niner: SCRAMBLED

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

6542 gives a girl's name,
8332 gives a second girl's name,
89712 gives a third girl's name.



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Mrs Clarke (pictured) had become used to making those choices as her previous teeth had worn down restricting her options. We were able to provide new dentures that were better fitting as well as look good too. It was a real pleasure to help give this youthful 92 year old a reason to have a bigger smile than when we first met her. We offer a complimentary consultation in order to see how we can best give you the smile you deserve.



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Tom Odell belts out a top tune



Travis's Fran Healy delighted the crowd



Justin Bieber performs with his dancers



Rick Astley, loving the atmosphere



Little Mix, who certainly couldn't be accused of dressing down

Justin time for a V-ariety of music



Kaiser Chiefs' Ricky Wilson

FROM the top of the bill to the bottom V Festival offered up a musical feast to keep the masses in high spirits all weekend.

Before the 70,000 festival goers were let in to Weston Park all the talk was regarding the main stage headliners.

Organisers pushed the boat out to get Justin Bieber over to the UK for the weekend, but fan speculation had mounted in the days leading up to the festival that he may pull out. Following his 'disappearance' from Instagram, Beliebers took to social media to express

their concern that their idol was in a bad place and would leave V with a huge gap in its line-up.

They need not have worried, as Bieber showed up to deliver a greatest hits set to an adoring, enormous crowd.

It was a fitting way to close proceedings on the Shropshire and Staffordshire border, with those who chose this leg over the Essex counterpart sure to have felt like they had claimed a small victory in getting the megastar to end their weekend. One thing that was notable by its absence, for the most part, was the rain.

So often the downfall of the whole festival experience, other

than a few showers on Saturday, the Midland crowd got to enjoy a healthy amount of sunshine, especially on Sunday.

Rihanna took to the stage in the dark of night on Saturday to give a huge crowd a party they will never forget. The superstar singer took things to another level with her eye-popping show.

For those who fancied something a bit different at the end of their nights, the MTV stage was headlined by indie heroes Kaiser Chiefs on Saturday and dance legends Faithless on Sunday.

As has become customary for V in recent years, a contrast between the worlds of pop and rock

was visible. Travis and Jake Bugg both attracted large crowds of die hard and casual fans. Travis frontman Fran Healy brought the crowd to life, even climbing the barrier at one point to get amongst it.

In between all of this was Tom Odell, whose unique voice and gorgeous songs gave everyone a chance to catch their breath, while Little Mix kept those eager to keep the party going entertained on the main stage.

Sunday's nostalgia kick came in the shape of Rick Astley, with Jess Glynne bringing us back up to date, with Stormzy and Bastille setting up the crowd for Justin's V-ery spectacular finale.



Rihanna striking a pose as one of the headline acts

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An impressive architect designed detached bungalow

The Nook in Summerhill, Kingswinford, is an impressively and beautifully appointed architect-designed detached bungalow in a delightfully secluded position.

It is for sale through Taylors at £274,950.

It is approached over a shared private driveway leading off Summerhill and alongside Warwick House. Only a short distance from the town centre, it has been built to a lavish specification and is well planned.

It has a choice of two double bedrooms plus a dining room layout, or creating three bedrooms if required.

This most convenient yet pleasant setting includes a broad frontage with parking plus garage and, to the rear, over 50 ft wide broad patio and lawned gardens offering almost complete seclusion, and a late afternoon sun trap that can be fully enjoyed. A personal inspection is essential and will impress the most discerning of viewers, said a spokesman for the selling agent.

In more detail the long reception hall has a cloaks cupboard off. There is an impressively spacious lounge with four casement 'diamond' leaded windows including French windows to the rear patio, an elegant 'period' fireplace with polished wood finish surround and 'marble' finish inset and hearth with ornate polished brass 'living flame' gas fire.

The dining room/potential third bedroom has a walk-in bay window and diamond leaded lights overlooking the front and space for a dining table and chairs/bedroom furniture.

The spacious, well fitted kitchen again has diamond patterned windows. The garage has a porch approach and a remote-controlled door.

Outside the frontage includes the shared driveway and a fore garden which is low maintenance with decorative chippings. The delightful rear garden has a large riven buff patio area leaving on to generous lawned gardens with shrubs surrounding and a timber store.

KINGSWINFORD £274,950



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KEY FEATURES

Architect-designed

Secluded position

Shared private driveway

Lavishly built

2/3 bedrooms



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New



KINGSWINFORD, Tresham Road

Enjoying a generous plot with a VERY LARGE GATED FRONT/SIDE DRIVEWAY gates, DOUBLE GARAGE plus a FURTHER LARGE GARAGE, this SUBSTANTIAL and EXTENDED DETACHED FAMILY HOME provides a generous layout which includes FOUR BEDROOMS. EPC D

£279,950



SEDGLEY, The Ridgeway

Superbly presented detached property benefitting from central heating and double glazing. EXTENDED family home boasts porch, hallway, good-sized living room, refitted kitchen with open-plan dining room, guest W/C, utility room, bathroom, FOUR BEDROOMS, garage. Enclosed rear garden with SUMMER HOUSE, driveway to front and MAGNIFICENT PANORAMIC DISTANT VIEWS to the rear. EPC: E. SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £269,950



WOODSETTON, Pool Street

STUNNING & unique, gas centrally heated, double glazed detached with Underfloor Heating & LARGE GARAGE (loft space above). imaginatively planned just a few years ago to provide superb living space including; imposing reception hall, (full height vaulted ceiling), store, tiled wet/shower room, living room, 22'5" through dining kitchen. Three bedrooms, bathroom. Gated driveway access, landscaped gardens. EPC: TBA. SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £220,000



COSELEY, Crowesbridge Mews

NO UPWARD CHAIN. Fantastically well presented detached home with central heating & double glazing located in popular cul-de-sac. THREE BEDROOM property is tastefully extended & benefits from porch, hallway, breakfast-kitchen, utility room, open-plan lounge, sunroom, bathroom, master bedroom with ensuite, garage/ storage, garden, driveway. EPC: C. SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £209,950



PENSNETT, Fernhurst Drive

This WELL ARRANGED, FOUR BEDROOM, DETACHED FAMILY HOME has gas central heating and is available with NO UPWARD CHAIN. In brief; Porch, Hall, Sitting Room, Dining Room, Kitchen, Four Bedrooms (Master with ENSUITE) and House Bathroom. Wide Drive, Garage and Large Rear Garden

EPC D

£205,000



DUDLEY, Balmoral View, Milking Bank

Significantly enhanced, improved, Freehold gas centrally heated 'oak effect' UPVC double glazed detached at head of driveway offering further potential accommodation includes porch, hallway, lounge, breakfast kitchen, store, 'activities room', inner 'office section', cloakroom. Three bedrooms, bathroom with white contemporary style suite, garden. EPC: TBC. SEDGLEY.

Offers in the region of £186,950



DUDLEY, The Broadway

FANTASTICALLY PRESENTED semi-detached situated on the extremely popular Broadway in Dudley. EXTENDED family home, along with central heating and double glazing also boasts, porch, entrance hall, living room, dining room, EXTENDED KITCHEN, guest W/C, sitting room, THREE BEDROOMS, bathroom, attractive enclosed rear garden, integral garage, driveway to front. NO UPWARD CHAIN. EPC: TBA SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £184,950



LOWER GORNAL, Wallows Wood

Tremendously modernised, gas centrally heated, double glazed semi detached that has been comprehensively modernised in recent years at head of cul-de-sac with porch, hall, and "open plan" accommodation incorporating lounge section (with bay), dining room section (with French doors out to garden), and a refitted kitchen section. Three bedrooms, bathroom. parking, "sun trap" side/rear garden. EPC: TBA SEDGLEY.

Offers in the region of £180,000



WORDSLEY, Waterways Gardens

Set within a small cul de sac, convenient for local amenities, this IMPRESSIVE TWO BEDROOM DETACHED BUNGALOW offers a DECEPTIVE layout of BEAUTIFULLY APPOINTED/ PRESENTED accommodation. With BLOCK PAVED DRIVEWAY, LARGE GARAGE and a rear garden. EPC D

£178,950

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Dudley Chronicle
Thursday, August 25, 2016



LOWER GORNAL, Straits Road

FOUR DOUBLE BEDROOMS! Enviably situated upon LARGE CORNER PLOT (with extensive parking, garaging and a large car port), an imposing, gas centrally heated & UPVC double glazed detached within walking distance of the village presented in superb order. The accommodation includes: reception hall, lounge, dining room, utility room, fitted cloakroom, well equipped kitchen with clear breakfast room section. Gallery landing, four double bedrooms, bathroom. Gardens. EPC:D. SEDGLEY



SEDGLEY, Longmeadow Drive, Northway

ABSOLUTELY OUTSTANDING, comprehensively renovated, significantly ENLARGED, gas centrally heated, double glazed detached family residence that has been transformed in recent months with lengthy garden abutting onto brook and countryside comprising; hall, L shape dining/living room, refitted 'hub of the house' kitchen, inner lobby, cloakroom, utility room. Three double bedrooms, bathroom. Shortened garage, drive & garden with distant views. EPC:TBA SEDGLEY



UPPER GORNAL , Botany Drive

Spacious, gas centrally heated, double glazed DETACHED HOUSE imaginatively planned to take advantage of sloping site with PANORAMIC DISTANT VIEWS. To upper floor is a split level hall, cloakroom, lounge, dining room, kitchen with 'shaker' style units, bedroom three, store. To the lower ground floor is a principal bedroom, store, & shower room ensuite, further double bedroom two, bathroom, utility room & CONSERVATORY. Garage, landscaped grounds. EPC:TBA SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £311,950

Offers in the region of £275,000

Offers in the region of £230,000



SEDGLEY, Wenlock Close, Brownswall estate

OFFERING POTENTIAL, a gas centrally heated, double glazed semi detached requiring some updating situated at head of short cul de sac in favoured district. The ENLARGED accommodation provides porch, hall, lounge, dining room, kitchen, utility room, separate toilet. Three bedrooms, bathroom, toilet, garage, garden. EPC: TBA SEDGLEY



PENSNETT, Corbyns Hall Road

THIS SPACIOUS & TRADITIONAL, THREE BEDROOM, DETACHED HOME comprises: Reception Hall, TWO RECEPTION ROOMS, Kitchen, Three Good First Floor Bedrooms, Family Bathroom, Driveway, Excellent Garage, Guests W.C and Large Rear Garden. EPC D



SEDGLEY, Linfield Gardens, Northway

NO UPWARD CHAIN - An delightful EXTENDED gas centrally heated majority UPVC double glazed semi detached at head of cul-de-sac (with good distant views) in favoured district. Well presented accommodation includes entrance porch, reception hall, breakfast kitchen with various integrated appliances, under stair store, extended 18ft living/dining room (with patio doors), three bedrooms (one with wardrobes), bathroom with white suite, brick garage, secluded garden. EPC Rating D SEDGLEY



WOLVERHAMPTON, Farrington Road, Ettingshall Park

STUNNING REFURBISHMENT WORKS! - Replacement double glazing, upgraded heating, wiring, re-plastering, re-roofing. Enlarged semi detached requiring some finishing works but offers further potential; porch, hall, cloaks, lounge, dining room, kitchen (no units), & potential utility room. Three bedrooms, bathroom (to be tiled), Garage, garden. EPC:TBA SEDGLEY. Offers based on £165,000 to be received for the vendors consideration by midday Tues 6 Sept 2016.



KINGSWINFORD, Denleigh Road

AN ENLARGED SEMI-DETACHED DORMER BUNGALOW requiring updating / improvement, yet providing an very spacious THREE BEDROOM layout with FANTASTIC POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVEMENT, plus a driveway, carport, GARAGE and a pleasant level rear garden. EPC E

Offers in the region of £170,000

£169,950

Offers in the region of £167,000

No upward chain

£159,950



DUDLEY, Cardoness Place

NO UPWARD CHAIN. Gas centrally heated double glazed (majority UPVC) semi detached in favoured/convenient district (close to Milking Bank amenities) with entrance hall, lounge, dining room, kitchen, pantry, THREE BEDROOMS, bathroom, potential garage space, sheltered expertly landscaped rear garden.. EPC: C SEDGLEY



COSELEY, Crowesbridge Mews

Exceptionally stylish, significantly enhanced, freehold, gas centrally heated UPVC double glazed two bedroom semi detached occupying a corner plot in favoured district comprising: entrance vestibule, lounge with 'living flame' gas fire, dining kitchen, two bedrooms, bathroom with white suite, lengthy driveway, brick 'contractors' garage, 'low maintenance' garden. EPC: D SEDGLEY



LOWER GORNAL , Ellowes Road

Fantastically presented, intermediate situated in the highly sought after area of Lower Gornal. Benefiting from central heating & double glazing, this TWO BEDROOM comprises: entrance hall, attractive fitted kitchen, living room, conservatory, LOFT ROOM, modern re-fitted bathroom, driveway to front and enclosed rear garden. VIEWING HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. EPC: TBA SEDGLEY



COSELEY, Paul Pursehouse Road

MAGNIFICENT GARDENS! - Absolutely outstanding, first quality, double glazed, gas centrally heated semi detached meticulously maintained & comprehensively upgraded throughout comprising enlarged hall, dining room, lounge (with double doors out to THE GARDEN), refitted kitchen, store, porch, utility room, three bedrooms (all with built in wardrobes), shower room, toilet. Extensive parking, expertly tended gardens. EPC:T.B.A. SEDGLEY



WOODSETTON, Duncroft Walk

Favourably situated in the Woodsetton area of Dudley and enjoying a leafy open aspect to the front, this FREEHOLD semi-detached property offers great potential. This good-sized family home benefits from living room, kitchen-diner, bathroom, THREE BEDROOMS, garage, part double glazing, gas central heating and has NO UPWARD CHAIN. EPC Rating E. SEDGLEY

New price WAS £150,000...NOW £145,000

Offers around £143,000

Offers in the region of £134,950

Offers in the region of £133,000

Offers in the Region of £124,950



COSELEY, Painters Croft

NO UPWARD CHAIN. Attractive, Freehold, gas centrally heated, UPVC double glazed semi detached 'starter home' with driveway parking (and further potential) in cul-de-sac comprising: hallway, L shape lounge, dining kitchen with a fine range of units & double opening French doors out to the garden. Two generous bedrooms, bathroom with white suite, gardens. EPC D SEDGLEY.



PENSNETT, Bryce Road

Available with NO UPWARD CHAIN, This BEAUTIFULLY APPOINTED & EXPENSIVELY FURNISHED, TWO BEDROOM, SEMI-DETACHED HOME comprises: Spacious Lounge, STUNNING CONTEMPORARY KITCHEN with WOW FACTOR, Well Appointed Shower Room & Large Garden. EPC E



BRIERLEY HILL, Waterfront West

This STUNNING & CONTEMPORARY, OPEN PLAN FLAT comprises: Hall, Stunning Open Plan Lounge with MODERN GLOSS KITCHEN with integrated appliances, Generous Double Bedroom, Gorgeous White Suite Bathroom, Allocated Parking, Communal Gardens. EPC: E



UPPER GORNAL, Hill Street

NO UPWARD CHAIN - Fastidiously maintained, gas centrally heated (recent boiler) & double glazed traditional end terrace of character that has been transformed in recent years with GOOD DISTANT VIEWS from the rear comprising: Lounge, recently refitted breakfast kitchen, two bedrooms, reappointed bathroom with white suite, slabbed patio and ALLOCATED PARKING SPACE. EPC: E SEDGLEY



BRIERLEY HILL, Adelaide Street

This PERIOD STYLE TERRACE HOME oozes CHARM & enjoys TWO WELL DECORATED RECEPTION ROOMS with LOVELY HIGH CEILINGS, MODERN WELL FITTED KITCHEN, Pretty garden, White Suite Bathroom, TWO GOOD BEDROOMS and VERSATILE LOFT SPACE. VIEW EARLY! EPC:E

New price WAS £117,000...NOW £116,000

£109,950

New price

£108,950

Offers in the Region of £107,500

£94,950

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Fine residence of substance in a delightful position

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<<<

A fine residence of substance and quality in a delightful position, Orchard Bank, 153 Wolverhampton Road, Sedgley, is set back along a country lane just off the Wolverhampton Road.

Having a rural feel and yet centrally location, it is for sale through Swinscoes at £399,950. The individually designed and immaculately maintained accommodation has flexible living space. This includes an entrance hallway, kitchen and utility room, lounge, a full size snooker/entertainment room, a dining room (possible bedroom four), a bedroom and a bathroom, while upstairs there are a further two bedrooms and an en-suite. There are extensive gardens to the front and rear of the property over a level of tiers, as well as double garage with workshop and another small garage.

Contact Swinscoes on 01902 672274 or visit www.swinscoes.co.uk



Recently redecorated modern detached

SMETHWICK
£239,950

A recently redecorated modern detached property on a popular estate with five bedrooms in Narel Sharpe Close, Smethwick, is ideal for commuting into Birmingham City Centre.

Recently redecorated and ideal for commuting, it is for sale through Scriven & Co at £239,950.

It has a canopied front entrance into a hallway, a cloakroom, three reception rooms, a kitchen, a staircase from hall to first floor landing, five bedrooms with an en-suite off the master, a house bathroom, central heating, double glazing, a side garage and front and rear gardens. The property has uPVC double glazing together with gas fired central heating.

Contact Scriven & Co on 0121 4224011 or visit www.scriven.co.uk



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123 Lots

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Plus properties on behalf of Receivers/Administrators

at Aston Villa Football Ground



3 Goode Close, Oldbury
1 Bedroom Studio Apartment
Guide: £44,000-£49,000



25 Oakham Avenue, Dudley
3 Bedroom Semi Detached House
Guide: £50,000 plus



60 Priory Road, Dudley
3 Bedroom Semi Detached House
Guide: £64,000-£68,000



24, 24a, 24b & 24c Bell End, Rowley Regis
2 Vacant Apartments & 2 Semi Detached Bungalows One of Which is Let
Guide: £250,000 plus



Walnut Cottage, 109 Cinder Bank, Netherton, Dudley
2 Bedroom Semi Detached House
Guide: £75,000 plus



14 Swancote Road, Dudley
3 Bedroom Semi Detached House which May Have Development Potential*
Guide: £45,000-£50,000

Vacant Residential Properties
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Commercial Investment Properties
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ENTRIES NOW INVITED FOR OUR NEXT AUCTION



*Development potential is subject to obtaining the necessary planning consents
Please note charges may apply in addition to the purchase price on some lots
For a definition of Guide Price & Reserve price please refer to our catalogue or website

123 Lots to include:

at Aston Villa Football Ground



View: 31 Aug 14:45, 2 Sept 11:15 & 3 Sept 10:30

46 Pages Lane, Great Barr

A Semi Detached Property with Porch, Two Reception Rooms, Kitchen, Landing, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, WC, Garden, Driveway Parking, Side Garage/Store, Partial Double Glazing & Central Heating.

Guide: £79,000 - £84,000



View: 31 Aug 14:00, 2 Sept 12:00 & 3 Sept 11:15

10 Delves Crescent, Walsall

A Semi Detached Property with Porch, Lobby, Reception Room, Kitchen, Landing, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom/WC with Shower, Gardens, Side Garage, Driveway Parking, part UPVC Double Glazing and Gas Central Heating.

Guide: £50,000 plus



View: 31 Aug 13:00, 2 Sept 13:00 & 3 Sept 12:15

Flat 60a Mill Road, Walsall

A First Floor Apartment, Situated in a Two Storey Block with Hall, Reception Room, Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Shower Room/WC, Communal Gardens, Allocated Garage, Partial Double Glazing and Gas Fired Central Heating.

Guide: £19,000 - £24,000



View: 27 Aug 12:45, 31 Aug 12:00 & 2 Sept 13:45

85 Shaw Road, Coseley

3 Bed Semi Detached House

Guide: £49,000 - £54,000



View: 27 Aug 13:30, 31 Aug 12:45 & 2 Sept 13:00

3 Harvington Road, Coseley

3 Bed Detached House

Guide: £79,000 - £84,000



View: 31 Aug 9:45, 2 Sept 16:15 & 3 Sept 14:45

23 Chetwyn Rd, Wolverhampton

3 Bed Semi Detached House which may be Suitable for Conversion to Flats/HMO*

Guide: £50,000 plus



View: 27 Aug 14:15, 31 Aug 13:30 & 2 Sept 12:15

10 Ivyhouse Lane, Bilston

2 Bed Detached House with Development Potential*

Guide: £29,000 - £34,000



View: 27 Aug 11:15, 31 Aug 10:30 & 2 Sept 15:15

45 South Green, Penn

3 Bed Semi Detached House

Guide: £49,000 - £54,000



View: 27 Aug 10:30, 31 Aug 10:00 & 2 Sept 15:45

37 Claverley Drive, Penn

3 Bed Semi Detached House

Guide: £59,000 - £64,000



View: 27 Aug 12:00, 31 Aug 11:15 & 2 Sept 14:30

51 Bevan Avenue, Parkfields

2 Bed Semi Detached House

Guide: £29,000 - £34,000



View: 31 Aug 12:00, 2 Sept 14:00 & 3 Sept 13:15

5 Tryon Place, Bilston

2 Bed Semi Detached House

Guide: £19,000 - £24,000



View: 31 Aug 11:15, 2 Sept 14:45 & 3 Sept 14:00

9 Bailey Road, Bilston

3 Bed Semi Detached House

Guide: £29,000 - £34,000



Viewings: The site is open for viewings

Land R/O 10 Broad St, Bilston

Development Site with Outline Planning for the Erection of 4 Flats

Guide: £15,000 - £20,000

FURTHER VIEWING APPOINTMENTS ARE AVAILABLE. FOR DETAILS CALL THE OFFICE ON 0121 233 5046

0121 233 5046

www.sdlbigwood.co.uk

@SDLBigwood



Spacious detached is close to town centre

OLDBURY

£249,950

This four-bedroomed detached house in Brades Road, Oldbury, is a spacious family property with parking, a garage and both front and rear gardens.

It is for sale through Tom Giles at £249,950 with no chain.

Warranting internal inspection to appreciate the size of accommodation being offered, it has gas central heating and double glazing, a porch, entrance hall, lounge, under-stairs store cupboard, dining room, dining kitchen, utility, lobby, cloakroom, four bedrooms, en suite shower and a main bathroom

Within walking distance of Oldbury town centre, Sandwell & Dudley Railway Station is also close by.

For further information contact Tom Giles on 0121 5526171 or visit www.tomgilesandco.co.uk



Town house is ideal family home with neat garden

OLDBURY

£129,950

<<<

Derek Spires are inviting offers of around £129,950 for this ideal family home in Yardley Close, Oldbury.

Being a well presented town house it has part double glazed and gas centrally heated accommodation to include three bedrooms and a shower room, a hallway, a through lounge/dining room, a kitchen and a downstairs WC.

It has a neatly laid out garden to the rear and the benefit of off-street parking at rear.

The property stands back behind a pedestrian walkway, having mainly lawned foregarden with a footpath approach. In more detail, the hall has wood-effect laminate flooring and storage and stairs off. One of the three bedrooms has built-in wardrobe while another has a storage cupboard.

Contact Derek Spires on 0121 4204646 or visit www.derekspiresandco.com

K.Stuart Swash

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www.kstuartswash.co.uk**



Appealing, three-bedroomed modern family house

A most appealing, three-bedroomed modern-style semi-detached family home in Minehead Road, Dudley, has just joined the property market.

It is for sale through Taylors at £149,950 with the huge advantage of having no chain.

In a popular location and with gas central heating and double glazing

DUDLEY

£149,950

its accommodation briefly comprises an entrance hall, a sitting room with a good sized dining area with plenty of space for a table and chairs, as well as a beam-effect to the ceiling and walls and a feature inglenook-

style fireplace housing a fire with a canopy over on a quarry-tiled hearth, an L-shaped breakfast kitchen with plenty of modern light-wood-effect units with a pantry, three bedrooms and a bathroom. There is a block paved drive, garage and enclosed rear garden.

Contact Taylors on 01902 880888 or visit www.taylors-estateagents.co.uk



Dealer thrives as popularity of Volvo vehicles goes up

Wolverhampton-based Volvo dealership, Brindley Wolverhampton, is playing an integral part in the success of the Swedish manufacturer's car sales as local customers continue to choose from its range of multi-award-winning models.

In just one month, Volvo has been presented with five separate awards, which focus on technology, quality and safety, beating tough competition.

Paul Garbett from Brindley Wolverhampton commented: "With renowned safety, quality and dependability, and a new-found style and desirability, the latest Volvo range is certainly making

an impact on our local customers – new and long-standing! For all the awards coming in, we're seeing more cars going out of the showroom to lots of happy customers, taking home their award-winning Volvo from an award-winning manufacturer."

The XC90 was named the Car Dealer Power Car of the Year 2016, as voted for by hundreds of independent and franchised dealers across the UK. For the second year running, the XC90 was also awarded Best Large SUV by consumer champions Auto Express.

At this year's Motor Trader Awards – one of the biggest on the retail motor industry calendar took two of the hotly contested categories – New Car of the Year (for the XC90) and Carmaker of the Year.

More recently, and available now from Brindley's Volvo Selekt Approved Used Car programme, the V40 took the Co-op Safe Used Car 2016 award. The inaugural Co-op Insurance award celebrates the safest used cars typically bought by families in the UK.

The V40 was one of the first cars to have autonomous emergency braking as standard. The system, known as City Safety, works at speeds of up to 31 mph and will automatically apply the brakes if it senses an impending crash to avoid the collision entirely or lessen its severity.

For more information on Volvo's award-winning vehicles, visit www.volvocars.co.uk or head to Brindley Wolverhampton's Wolverhampton Road showroom to arrange a test drive.

CAR OF THE WEEK

13/13 Fiat Scudo 2.0 Multijet Diesel 130 Panorama Family L2
5dr 8 Seater, 46k, Beige, Alloys, Climate Control, CD, E/Windows
£10995
£58 Per Week

09/09 Mercedes C180K Sport
5dr Automatic Estate, ONLY 35k MILES, Silver, AMG Alloys, Half Leather, CD, Climate Control, Park Sensors
£10495 / £56 Per Week

08/57 Audi TT 2.0T FSI 2dr S Tronic
Convertible Automatic, 55k, Red Metallic, Alloys, Grey Leather, CD, E/Windows
£10495 / £56 Per Week

07/57 Mercedes SLK 200K 1.8
2dr Tip Hard-top Convertible Automatic, 56k, Blue, Alloys, Cream Leather, Heated seats, CD, E/Windows
£9695 / £50 Per Week

09/09 Audi A4 2.0 TDI Diesel 143 SE
5dr Multitronic Auto Estate, 88k, Black, Alloys, Digital Air Con, CD, E/Windows
£8495 / £47 Per Week

09/59 Mercedes C250 Blue-Efficiency 2.2 CDI Diesel Elegance
84k, Grey, Black Leather, Alloys, CD, E/Windows
£8495 / £47 Per Week

10/10 Fiat Doblo 1.4 8V Dynamic High Roof
5dr Mobility Wheelchair Access Vehicle, 39k, Red, Wheelchair Access Ramp, Alloys, CD, E/Windows
£6495 / £33 Per Week

06/56 Toyota Rav-4 XT4 4D 2.2 Diesel 4WD
5dr, 75k, Silver, Alloys, Air Con, CD, E/Windows, E/Sunroof
£6495 / £33 Per Week

Finance example: 2009 Vauxhall Corsa Automatic. Cash Price £4995, Deposit £300, Amount of credit £4695, Fixed interest rate 6.25% Flat rate, 11.8% Apr, 60 monthly Payments of £110.53 (£25.50 per week) Total amount payable £4991.04 (includes Document fee and Completion fee, Subject to status)

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£6495/£33 Per Week

07/57 Mini Cooper 1.6 Cooper Sidewalk
2dr Convertible, 63k, Silver, Alloys, Tan Leather, Air Con, CD, E/Windows
£5995 / £31 Per Week

09/09 Ford Fiesta 1.25 Zetec
3dr, ONLY 26k MILES, Red, Alloys, Air Con, CD Player, Electric Windows
£5795 / £30 Per Week

10/10 Skoda Fabia 1.9 TDI Sport
60k, Mauve with White Roof, Alloys, Air Con, CD, E/Windows
£5495 / £28 Per Week

07/07 Volkswagen Touran 1.6 S
5dr 7 Seater MPV, 70k, Black, Alloys, Air Con, CD, Electric Windows
£4995 / £26 Per Week

09/58 Vauxhall Corsa 1.4i 16V Design
5dr Automatic, 45k, Blue Metallic, Alloys, Air-Con, CD, E/Windows
£4995 / £26 Per Week

08/58 Citroen Berlingo Multispace 1.6i 16V VTR
5dr MPV, 49k miles, Beige, E/Windows, CD, Sliding Side Doors
£4995 / £26 Per Week

08/58 Fiat Bravo 1.9 Multijet Diesel Dynamic
5dr, 61k, Blue, Alloys, CD, Air-Con, E/Windows
£3495 / £18 Per Week

2005/05 Citroen C3 1.4i 16V XTR
5 dr Sensodrive Automatic, ONLY 53k Miles, Black, Alloys, CD, Electric Panoramic Glass Sliding Sunroof, E/Windows
£2395 / £19 Per Week

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New Kia Niro good deal on all fronts

By Ian Donaldson

Want a car that uses less fuel than the one you drive at the moment?

Well, the obvious way is to choose something designed with economy in mind. The car you see here might well fit the bill.

It won't cost the earth (prices start at £21,295 and top out at £26,995) and the new Kia Niro works hard to keep fuel consumption down, thanks to combining petrol power with an electric motor and big battery.

Without trying, you will see a figure comfortably the right side of 40mpg – even cruising the motorway at the same speed as all the Audis and BMWs in the outside lane.

But here's the thing: show a bit of restraint and that figure will charge towards 60mpg and you'll arrive almost as quickly and a lot less stressed.

I know because those figures – 43mpg, getting a move on and 57mpg with a little restraint – shone out from the Niro's dash after a drive in two versions of this Korean-built newcomer.

Designed

The economy choice is up to you (and applies to every other car of course, not just a new Kia) but is perhaps most sharply shown in something like the Niro because it really is not designed for all-out sporting action in the first place.

Instead we have a car designed from scratch – with an expensive to develop platform all to itself – to provide a family of five with enough space to travel in comfort with lots of luggage and not use too much petrol.

Helping achieve that hoped for economy (up to 74.3mpg official average, but less in the real world) is a 104bhp petrol engine and a 43bhp electric motor that drive the front wheels through a six-speed automatic gearbox.

It will manage short distances on battery power alone but most of the time the two systems are at work, with the battery recharging itself as you slow down and the electric motor turns itself to braking.

Even with both power sources at work the car feels simply fast enough, not fast – with 101mph flat out and 11.5 seconds to 62mph quoted.

But it's all done with the minimum of fuss as the gearbox chooses the right ratio on your behalf.

Style-wise, the Niro is (yet) another entrant to the madly burgeoning ranks of crossover vehicles – cars designed to look like a loose mix of sturdy off-roadster and slick hatchback. The world can't get enough of them at the moment, so it would be churlish of Kia not to oblige.

You'd have to say the Niro is a very mild sort of crossover; looking almost as sleek and squat as a hatch and certainly needing no higher a climb into the driving seat. The result is that it slips through the air more easily than most crossovers, to the benefit of fuel consumption and wind noise.

Grades

There are four versions of the Niro, logically called 1, 2, 3 and First Edition. All share the same engine and gearbox, although if you choose grades 3 or First Edition they come with smart 18ins alloys in place of the standard 16-inchers and put out more CO2 (101g/km versus 88g/km) and use considerably more petrol in the official test (64.2mpg plays 74.3mpg).

Trying a version of both on some fairly undemanding Northumbrian roads, both cars showed a little over 43mpg. Slowing down and driving with economy in mind transformed that figure to 57.8mpg.

The smaller wheeled Niro rode the worse roads better than its more alloyed sibling, although you'll have to take the official economy drop if you fancy one of the higher-specified Niro's.

All of the newcomers have dual zone automatic air conditioning, all round electric windows, DAB radio, USB and AUX ports and a trip computer. T

hey've also all got cruise control and Bluetooth smartphone connectivity.

Move to level 2 (£22,795) and additions include a reversing camera and satellite navigation, while the £24,695 grade 3 brings a bigger touchscreen and powerful JBL sound system.

Top of the Niro tree is the £26,995 First Edition, with active cruise control, automatic emergency braking, electric sliding sunroof, leather trim and heated seats – front and rear, with a cooling facility in the two at the front.

So, any version of the Niro is unlikely to leave you feeling shortchanged on the fixtures and fittings front.

The usual Kia seven years/100,000 mile warranty is as good as it gets and the newcomer does well on economy too – even better when the driver helps out.



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For 7 year / 100,000 mile manufacturer's warranty and terms and exclusions visit www.kia.co.uk. Offer not available with any other offer. Subject to availability on vehicles registered before 30th September 2016. For Motability details and eligibility visit: www.motability.co.uk



New Alfa Romeo Giulia in UK soon

By James Parker

Head joins the heart today as Alfa Romeo announces the UK pricing and specification for the all-new Alfa Romeo Giulia range, with prices starting from £29,180 on-the-road.

Featuring all new rear-wheel drive architecture, perfect weight distribution, best in class power-to-weight ratios, and innovative engine and driver technologies, the new Giulia is every inch a true Alfa Romeo. In terms of style, the car stands out for its distinctive Italian design, which is expressed through an impeccable sense of proportions, based on the technical architecture, as well as the sophisticated simplicity and quality surfaces used both inside and out.

In the UK, the Giulia model range features five trim levels – The Giulia, Super, Tecnica, Speciale and the range topping Quadrifoglio – and is available in 13 different exterior colour options. Alfa Romeo Giulia drivers can also choose between four engine variants (two petrol and two diesel), which are all paired to a new eight-speed automatic transmission as standard.

The entry trim level 'Giulia' includes comprehensive standard specification. It includes new efficient active safety systems, including Forward Collision Warning with Autonomous Emergency Brake with pedestrian recognition, Integrated Brake System, and Lane Departure Warning – all of which have contributed to the new Alfa Romeo Giulia being awarded a prestigious Five Star Euro NCAP rating.

Focuses

Rounding out the entry level trim are a host of styling and functional features. Exterior features include 16-inch alloy wheels, LED rear lights, chrome exhaust and aluminium brake calipers.

As with all Alfa Romeos, the interior of the car focuses on driving satisfaction with dual-zone climate control, Alfa™ D.N.A. rotary driving mode selector, 3.5" TFT colour cluster instrument panel, UConnect™ 6.5" display infotainment system with DAB plus MP3 and Bluetooth connectivity, 8-speaker audio system, rear parking sensors and cruise control.

The full package of standard equipment on the Alfa Romeo Giulia trim level is supplemented on the Super version with exclusive interior and exterior features. Exterior wise, Super trim level adds 17-inch alloy wheels and a dual chrome exhaust tip.

Inside, Alfa Romeo Giulia Super features an 8.8-inch 3D navigation with 7-inch TFT display, as well as leather and cloth seat trims in three colour options. The engine range comprises the 200hp 2.0-litre turbo petrol, 150hp 2.2 JTDM-2 and 180hp 2.2 JTDM-2. Prices for the Super range start at £30,750.

The Tecnica adds useful and stylish features for the business user, including power seats, climate pack and privacy glass. It also adds a driver assistance pack featuring front and rear parking sensors and rear view camera. Prices for the Alfa Romeo Giulia Tecnica start at £30,995.

Upgrade

Building on the Super trim level, drivers wanting an even sportier presence on the road can upgrade to the Speciale trim level.

From the exterior this sporty trim level features 18-inch 'Sport' alloys, 25W bi-Xenon headlamps, sports front and rear bumpers, a sports diffuser, dual chrome exhaust and red brake callipers.

Inside the Speciale features aluminium metal sport pedals and footrest, heated and powered front seats, heated steering wheel and leather sports seats. Prices for the Speciale start at £34,150.

Top-of-the-range Quadrifoglio trim adds functional and styling contents to the standard specification. These include leather and Alcantara upholstered sports seats, sports steering wheel with red ignition button, carbon fibre inserts for the interior and aerodynamic exterior spoilers, comfort and safety features that also include Blind Spot Monitoring technology and rear camera as well as 35W Xenon headlights with AFS technology.

In addition, it features technical gear designed specifically to maximise dynamic performance: the Alfa™ Active Aero Splitter system, the dedicated braking system, the Alfa™ D.N.A. Pro selector with Race mode that communicates with the Alfa™ Chassis Domain Control (CDC) system, and Alfa™ Torque Vectoring.

Powered by a new 510hp, 600Nm Bi-Turbo V6 petrol engine, with an eight-speed paddle shift automatic transmission as standard. Pricing for the Quadrifoglio super saloon start at £59,000.

The new Giulia range will go on sale in the UK later this year.

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Audi's baby SUV Q2 is delivered

By Sophie Williamson-Stothert

Unveiled to the public at the Geneva Motor Show in March, this sporty-looking SUV is the fourth (and smallest) member of Audi's Q range – the entry point to the Q range – alongside its bigger brothers, the Q7, the Q5 and the Q3. Priced from £22,230, it's set to take on the Mercedes GLA and the BMW X2.

Taking the form of a five-door utility vehicle, the Q2 is quite the looker. Thanks to its high shoulder line and low roof that descends and merges into the C-pillars with contrasting colour offset blades, the Q2 boasts a bold and muscular stance. Up front, its high-mounted singleframe octagonal grille, hawk-eye headlights and large air inlets mounted on the front bumper result in a menacing look.

The Q2 incorporates the latest multimedia gadgets from the new A4 and there are three generously equipped specification levels to choose from, with the entry level SE versions benefitting from a suite of features from standard. These include smartphone interface, which supports Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, a seven-inch MMI screen and Bluetooth connectivity.

For an additional £1,500, Sport models gain 17-inch alloy wheels (up from 16-inch on SE), drive select with five operational modes, cruise control, light and rain sensors, and sport seats. Step up to the range-topping S Line, £2,250 above the Sport, and stand-out features include the hallmark front, side and rear styling enhancements, 18-inch alloy wheels, LED headlights, LED interior lighting, and a multi-functional steering wheel. All models can be specced with Audi's virtual cockpit display – an all-digital 12.3-inch display showing information tailored to the driver's needs.

Extensive

To help attract a new generation of buyers, Audi has created an extensive palette of extravagant colours for customers to choose from – 12 to be precise. There's also a huge list of customisation options inside and out, including a two-tone roof and coloured dash inserts and inlays. These little touches have been specifically designed to counter criticism that all Audis come only in dull greys, blacks and blues. All UK cars will also come with colour-coded bumpers.

Let's look at the tech: inside, drivers will be impressed to see the Q2 comes with a wireless phone charger, smartphone connectivity and a Bang & Olufsen stereo system as standard. In short, the Q2 is equipped with technology you'd expect to find further up the range.

Along with the optional virtual cockpit and head-up display, the Q2 can also be specced with assistance systems such as pre-sense safety kit (which includes pedestrian recognition and Autonomous Emergency Braking), adaptive cruise control, traffic jam assist and active lane assist.

The Q2 also fulfils the fundamental expectations of an SUV with benefits such as good visibility and a large boot, which can carry up to 1,050 litres. Optional practical solutions include a power tailgate and a three-way split rear bench backrest with cargo through-loading. It's spot on, Audi has managed to build a spacious and compact SUV that can nip around corners with ease. In fact, it's one of the most powerful models in the segment. It even incorporates a low seating position, similar to an Audi saloon which gives you confidence while on jaunts across winding country roads.

The Q2 is launching with an initial choice of two four-cylinder petrol engines – the 115bhp 1.6-litre TDI and the Cyl-inder-on-Demand 150bhp 1.4-litre TFSi. A three-cylinder 115bhp 1.0-litre TFSi and a four-cylinder 150bhp 2.0-litre TDI will become available later in the year. The 1.4-litre petrol and 1.6-litre diesel units are expected to top the sales charts.

As an alternative to the six-speed manual gearbox, Audi has said it will offer the seven-speed S tronic dual clutch transmission across the range, bar the 1.0-litre, which is already standard on the 2.0-litre TDI. The brand has also announced that from 2017, a 2.0-litre TFSi petrol unit, allied exclusively to Quattro all-wheel-drive and S tronic, will be introduced to the range. At this point, it will be possible to combine the 150bhp TDI and TFSi engines with Quattro drive.

As standard, the Audi Q2 offers buyers plenty of bang for their buck. You could describe it as a compact A4; not only is it offering premium equipment and driver engagement at a lower cost to its rivals, it's got bags of space and oozes family-friendly practicality from every corner.

It's also more than £4,000 cheaper than the entry-level Mercedes GLA 200 CDI Sport.



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PAULINE attractive petite nurse, loves evenings in/out, looking for honest male to share loving friendship and good times. Discretion expected/assured. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 379535

VERY attractive intelligent blonde, 59, WLTW tall attractive solvent man. No Tattoos. South Yorks. Text only Mailbox: 5430085

55 year old female looking for friendship, meals out, coffee, chats, work part time and care for parent. Text only Mailbox: 5517508

VERY attractive blonde lady, own house in lovely village, loves travel, entertaining, exercise, would like to meet tall attractive solvent male. Text only Mailbox: 5430085

CAROLINE, slim attractive 40's fit female, OHAC, divorced, ready to be romanced again, seeks similar minded male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423301

LINDA, 58, lonely lady, likes walks in the countryside and meals out, WLTW a gentleman, 50-64, n/s, Coventry area. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423547

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+. Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3003 Box 419673

CARRIE single 29yr old slim pretty Care Assistant, looking for a fun guy for nights in/out, good times, love and laughter. Give me a ring. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423489

KIM, 32yrs, attractive blonde lady seeks discreet gent for daytime distractions. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3003 Box 421657

BEV 32, 5ft, petite, very pretty, trendy with a great figure and big personality, loves animals, children and WLTW fun male to be my soul mate. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423473

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 3011 Box: 409715

CAROL, 38, slim gorgeous brunette with lots of interests looking to put some romance back into life, seeking willing male to spoil rotten and love. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423439

KERRY, 35yrs, married in open relationship, attractive, tall, slim and very presentable. Seeks discreet gent any age for casual pleasurable encounters. Tel: 0906 515 3043 Box 422363

MELINDA, 52yrs, attractive and broad minded seeking chap any age for some fun. Couples also. Text Only Box: 4050295

JESS, pretty blonde lady, 29yrs, feminine and caring. Loves older mature men who are worldly wise. Looks unimportant must have GSOH. Text Only Box: 4000683

STACY 28yr old gorgeous brunette with buxom figure, intelligent and sensual, WLTW genuine male to get to know for fun dates and more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 377509

KATRIANA, professional sincere lady, 48yrs, loves to have a good time. Very sensual and loves men of all ages. Please text me for a chat. Text Only Box: 4148978

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel: 0906 515 3019 Box: 413399

CAROL, 44, brunette with plenty of spare time on her hands seeks special mature male for fun times together. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423057

EMILY, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent any age/looks. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 421375

LYNN, 51, tall curvy blue eyed brunettes loves countryside, motor sports and cuddles, seeks tactile romantic male for some fun. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423443

LORRAINE, attractive solvent brunette, 34yrs, own house/car wltm gent any age, looks unimportant but must have GSOH. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3031 Box 422415

JEAN, 56, shy brunette with lots of love to give to the right man seeks mature male to share relaxed relationship with. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423305

SARAH 39, blonde hair, blue/green eyes, fun loving and romantic looking for new possibilities with well built, dark haired tactile male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423093

JESSICA, sporty blonde lady 32yrs, recently divorced so seeking some uncomplicated fun with older gent. Must have gosh. Text Only Box: 4039004

BLACK, attractive cultured lady seeks white gentleman, age 40-60 for friendship first perhaps LTR later. Text only Mailbox: 5511784

CAROL 37 attractive slim blonde, curves in all the right places, nice personality, good company, looking for caring man for fun times. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420757

CATHY attractive 35yr singleton, varied interests, looking for trustworthy male for companionship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423231

KATHERINE, 45, romantic, slim, feminine, loves to live life to the full, seeks adventurous outgoing man who appreciates and enjoys intimate times, I'll text no lies! Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423261

LORNA 34, sensual, shapely brunette WLTW tall friendly guy for romantic no strings fun. Ask no questions, I'll text no lies! Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423241

BROWN eyed brummie female 55 smoker, likes music, cinema, travel, meals out, WLTW male 66 - 73 for LTR. Text only Mailbox: 5501142

BROWN eyed brummie female, 65, smoker, likes music, cinema, meals out, WLTW male, 66-73, for LTR. Text only Mailbox: 4400186

LOVELY Oriental lady in Carmarthenshire seeks older man 70+ to share company and special times and to be a partner. Text only Mailbox: 5506384

JANE, very attractive blonde, own house in lovely village, car etc, loves travel to sunny places, entertaining, exercise WLTW male with similar interests. Text only Mailbox: 5430085

ATTRACTIVE energetic mature lady, looking for well-travelled, solvent companion for holidays, dining out and days away. Text only Mailbox: 5502846

RETIRE widower, caring, attractive female, likes gardening, travel, animals, comedy, seeks tall, funny, kind chap. Shropshire. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411459

LADY, 48, 5ft2, hazel eyes, brown hair, likes bowling, meals out, nights in, ice skating, looking for a toy boy, 30-42, who is fun and enjoys life to have a good time with. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422679

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MATURE female 63, large breasted, seeks assertive younger man 30-50 for adult fun. Must be discreet. Text only Mailbox: 5495834

JOANNA, 49 years old, looking to meet a man for friendship 50/60 years old. Text only Mailbox: 5428223

ALISON 28, feminine, outgoing, adventurous brunette who knows what she wants, seeks fit, fun loving man to sweep her off her feet. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423061

EILEEN, 49, lovely brunette, adventurous and eager to please seeks intelligent male to share the fun side of life together. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423007

SABINA, 35, outgoing attractive brunette, fit and carefree just looking for fun times without complications, maybe more later. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423003

WIDOW, 5ft2, looking for a gentleman for friendship, days out, meals out and for friendship adult companionship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422657

YOUNG, big boobed, single mum. Looking for a fun guy, but wants to be spoiled. Relationship ideally but happy with no strings fun. Text only Mailbox: 5496828

ATTRACTIVE slim 54yr old female looking for caring genuine male 50-58 yrs to wine and dine with, share nice times with, please get in touch. Text only Mailbox: 5395695

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MATURE, passionate male, 30s WLTW a lady, grab the chance while I am single! Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423195

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GUY, 47, 5ft7, dark hair, blue eyes, loves music, DVDs, nights in and out, seeks female, 30-42, for friendship and LTR, in the Leamington Spa/Rugby area. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423559

JIMBO, friendly fun loving chap, 42yrs, own building company. Divorced, no kids. Wants a kind caring lady to spoil, any age, single mums welcome. Text Only Box: 4036422

TONY, 58, tall, dark hair, seeks mature female, 65+, for hassle free liaisons, looks not important. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423389

MALE 59, N/S, fit, slim, seeks attractive slim female for discreet no strings friendship and fun. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413655

RETIRE widower, 57", slim salt/pepper hair, quite active, interests vary, loyal, trustworthy, reliable, seeks mature lady for friendship. Text only Mailbox: 4906469

SINGLE 38 year old male, fun loving, tall, blue eyes, looking for caring 30 to 50 year old female, passionate and fun loving. Text only Mailbox: 5516385

FIT mechanic, looking for female any age for friends with benefits arrangement. Text only Mailbox: 4605333



BALE 45, easy going, looking for a lady for adult fun. Cardiff area. Text only Mailbox: 5515485

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ANDY, from West Brom, slim, very young looking 49, looking for a special lady to spend fun times together and loving relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 421747

MALE, young looking 49, 5ft5, slim build, from West Bromwich, likes films, socialising, looking for a fun lady who likes to laugh, for good times/possible LTR. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 421783

ROBERT, slim, intelligent, N/S, 50's, seeks attractive, younger female for uncomplicated friendship and fun. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 312443

TALL attractive male, 56, looking to meet a mature woman, size 18 plus, any age, for close fun times. Text only Mailbox: 5410860

WIDOWER, 73, near Coventry, healthy and very active, seeks female, 58-68, for companionship, days out, theatre, and regular short trips to property in Marbella. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423339

MALE, 41, shaved hair, dark brown eyes, athletic build, open minded, up for NSA fun with a female. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423349

MATURE male seeking fun times, Coventry area. Text only Mailbox: 4830151

PROFESSIONAL male, 56, young looking, slim, fit, N/S, seeks younger female for fun and friendship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 310626

ROBERT 50's, N/S, slim, attractive, GSOH, looking for attractive female for discreet friendship and fun. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 358600

MEDIUM build male, single, enjoys days out, country pubs and keep fit, looking for a soul mate. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423189

ADVENTUROUS 36-year-old male, dark hair, slim, likes music, cycling and photography, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 384406

ATTRACTIVE male, 58, N/S, fit, missing pleasant female company, seeks open-minded, slim, attractive female for discreet liaisons. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 384406

DAVE, 54, 5ft10, medium build, easy going, happy, looking for an attractive, loving and caring female, 45-65, for friendship and relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423073

MIKE 49, slim, young looks, seeks female, 35-50 for friendship and going out. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 356651

MALE 57, tall, seeks mature female, 50-70, for close adult fun, any size or status. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422409

EDDIE, young looking 54, painter and decorator by trade, likes going out and having a good time, sport and all kinds of music, looking for a LTR with a caring, honest, trustworthy person as I am. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423113

SHAUN, short black hair, mixed race, 5ft7, average build, looking for a lady, looks not important but a great personality is a must! Hanley area. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423107

47 year old guy, seeks female, 30-42, in the Leamington Spa/Rugby area, for LTR. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423105

IRISH widower, 65, 5ft9, GSOH, WLTW a lady for friendship in the North Birmingham area. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423071

IRISH male, 60s, 5ft9, independent, n/s, wishes to meet a lady in the Birmingham area. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420859

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07572 554829.

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07831 609261 or 01384 258061.

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classic cars

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10 Personals

personal

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general

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CLASSIFIEDS WORK!



Steve Brown and his Tamaki College team with visiting All Blacks including coach Osaiski Kupu and players Brodie Retallick and Julian Savea

Coach Brown kicks off new life with future All Blacks

HE is responsible for introducing rugby to hundreds of children from the West Midlands.

Now Cannock's Steven Brown believes he is coaching youngsters who will one day star for the imperious All Blacks after starting a new life in New Zealand.

Rugby fanatic Brown – together with his wife of 33-years Julie – are well-known locally for the role they played in establishing the junior game in Cannock.

Back in 1983 Brown launched an under-14s side at Cannock RFC in a bid to show local youngsters they weren't just restricted to playing football.

In the years that followed, under-12s, under-10s and an under-19 colts team were quickly established with Brown then moving on to coach the Cannock first team.

A similar stint at Worcester Warriors followed with the coach helping train youngsters aged from eight to 13.

Culture

In 2012, having also built up a successful IT business in his professional life, Brown decided to move to the other side of the world to support Julie's dream of living in a different culture. But his love for junior rugby was never going to diminish with the coach now taking the reigns of junior teams at Tamaki College in Auckland.

In a country where rugby is the national support, Brown has continued to thrive and was recently visited by, and held a training session with, six All Blacks after his Tamaki College under-14s side won a competition to find the best newly-founded young team in New Zealand.

And the coach admits meeting Malakai Fekitoa, Owen

SPORTING FEATURE

By Joseph Masi

"Having coached rugby around the world this will remain as one of my greatest moments."

Franks, Brodie Retallick, Julian Savea, Codie Taylor and Ofa Tu'ungafasi was an experience he and his pupils will never forget.

"Meeting the All Blacks was, of course, a great moment for me but I was just so proud of the boys because they were a credit to their families and to Tamaki College," Brown said. "The All Blacks gave us some great tips and provided a day that these youngsters and myself will never forget."

"Having coached rugby around the world this will remain as one of my greatest moments."

"Tamaki College is not known for being a rugby school, but it currently has an excellent first XV, under-15s and now an under-14s team. I know that I am coaching future All Blacks."

Brown's love for rugby began as a youngster when he watched his brother Bill star for the likes of Lichfield, Staffordshire and London Irish.

A tough tackling prop, he himself played for Lichfield as well as Staffordshire, Stafford and Walsall. But it was after hanging up his boots that he and his wife began looking to

encourage more youngsters to take up the sport. To start the Cannock RUFC junior teams I had to prove to the local youngsters from the wider Cannock area that there was another sport other than football," he said.

"Cannock RUFC Juniors with an under-14 team then won the Staffordshire Championship in their first season."

"The following season we started the under-12s and the following season the under-10s."

"The mini junior section was established and to continue our feeder policy we organised a Chase Schools Cup. We then went on to take over the under-19s colts for Cannock."

"Cannock junior teams then went on to beat the best Midlands teams such as Moseley, Walsall, Bromsgrove, Stafford and Lichfield."

Fortunate

After achieving so much success in junior rugby, Brown revealed the pair opted to move the other side of the world to fulfil Julie's dream of living in New Zealand.

"We were fortunate that I had done everything I had wanted to do in business," he said.

"Julie had always wanted to live in New Zealand and she had supported me throughout life and it was my turn to support her."

Now with expert knowledge of rugby on both sides of the hemisphere, Brown believes that mix is helping the pupils he is currently teaching.

"I have learned so much from being in New Zealand."

"The boys here are so dedicated and fit and I have still not worn any of them down in training."

"You tell them to jump and they say how high. If they believe in you they will run through fire."



Rugby coach Steve Brown

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It's pain and strain in run against train

AFTER racing against the clock for most of the year a couple of athletes from Dudley Kingswinford Running Club pitted themselves against something a little different by taking part in the annual Race The Train event in Wales.

Organised by the Rotary Club in Tywyn, the race challenges runners to beat the steam locomotive from the Talylyn Railway over a tough 14-mile course.

The race starts with a toot of the train whistle as runners head off through the town and the train starts its own journey. The runners cope with some difficult terrain whilst the worst the train has to contend with is leaves on the line.

Instead of a nice direct course across the countryside runners have to deal with farmland, paths and trails, ploughed fields and muddy woodland, with some stretches on single file trails only used by sheep. All the time they are hoping to beat the train back to the finish line.

The weather conditions were typically Welsh, driving rain and fierce winds at the runners' backs on the way out, then blowing strongly into their faces for the return journey. Any time gains made on the way out were particularly valuable as they would soon disappear heading home, as the train, untroubled by the weather, continued its relentless pursuit.

Of the two club members taking part Dave Norman was suitably chuffed to finish strongly, coming home in 1.44.05 to take 85th place and, more importantly, ahead of the train.

Mark Homer, who was on track to beat the loco, unfortunately went flying in a nasty fall that meant he ran out of steam. He still did well in the circumstances to finish in 1.52.03 to take 178th out of a field of 834.

Rampant Spartans put the ten-man Yeltz to the sword

Halesowen Town 0 Blyth Spartans 5 EARLY home efforts from Aaron Griffiths and Richard Sho-Silva petered out and Spartans took a 24th minute lead when Matty Pattison curled a 20-yard free-kick directly into the corner of the net in sublime style.

Yeltz almost levelled when Malcolm Melvin's header struck the post but any hopes ended when Danny Bragoli was sent off for a second bookable offence at the end of the first half. Blyth took full advantage with four goals in a 13-minute spell as 10-man Yeltz capitulated.

Goalkeeper Dan Platt spilled a 61st minute shot from captain Robbie Dale, allowing Danny Maguire to tap home the loose ball. Four minutes later Stephen Turnbull crossed for Ryan Hutchinson to head home Blyth's third. A fourth followed in the 68th minute when Andrew Cartwright crossed for Pattison to smash his second into the roof of the net.

It became all too easy for Spartans as Maguire struck the post and the visitors completed win in the 73rd minute when Maguire beat Platt from the edge of the area.

Gabriel 100 vital in tricky Stratford trip

Stratford-upon-Avon 1st XI (164) lost to Stourbridge (217) by 53 runs

THINGS fell into place for struggling Stourbridge to notch up a 53 runs victory over Stratford-upon-Avon. A ton from opener Tarryck Gabriel plus the bowlers destroying the opposition top order brought the positive result.

Put into bat, Stour opening pair Alex Bingham and Gabriel made a solid start. The unhappy Bingham had to walk LBW for 15 off Perry Derrick with the score on 48 in the 12th over.

Gabriel and Zain Ul Hassan put on 94. The pace of Ben Pigott bought the downfall of Ul

Cricket

Hassan edging a ball to the keeper for 40 but Gabriel at the other end on 52 looked threatening. His innings came to end in the 34th over, having reached a ton with a six, caught and bowled by Pigott for 104 off 100 balls that included 13 fours and two sixes.

With the score on 165-3 in the 34th over Stour were set for a winning total but the lower order crumbled with just 52 more runs added.

In reply, a wicket off the fourth ball from Umar

Khalid started the damage by clipping the off stump of Robb West for a duck. A four wickets haul by Jitesh Jivan-Patel destroyed Stratford's top order. The icing on the cake was Khalid bowling number 6 Jake Salmon for a duck. Then, for some inexplicable reason, Jivan-Patel was taken off. Opener Kirby kept Stratford hopes alive with Chris Calcott moving the score on to 88 for 7. Then Calcott was caught and bowled by Gabriel for 16. The partnership of Kirby and Adrain Witts put on 70 runs, causing panic until Witt was bowled by Nabeel Ali. Kirby remained not out on 72 off 124 balls having batted three hours.

Heathens hammered by Fen Tigers

CRADLEY slumped to their heaviest defeat in five years as they were thrashed 60-29 at Mildenhall on Sunday.

The Heathens travelled to West Row without influential heat leader Ashley Morris due to a fixture clash with Premier League side Peterborough.

And they had no answer to the Fen Tigers as they were condemned to their worst result since a 64-27 hammering at Stoke in 2011.

Just six days after losing their proud unbeaten home record at the hands of local rivals Birmingham, Will Pottinger's side saw their National League play-off hopes dealt another major blow.

Only skipper Max Clegg offered any real resistance, winning his opening three rides in classy fashion on his way to 11 points. Former favourite Ellis Perks, guesting for Morris, delivered the ride of the night with a brave move to blast from last to first in heat nine.

But Heathens ran 13 last places on a nightmare afternoon, and team boss Pottinger was unable to hide his disappointment.

"We've come to expect not getting hammered like that away from home, so personally I was very disappointed with that result," he said. "That performance just wasn't good enough, we should be doing much better and we'll certainly be looking for a big improvement."

"We know the riders are a lot better than that, but for whatever reason we just didn't perform and we got what we deserved."

"We still have a number of matches, but if we're going to make the play-offs we certainly need to up our game."

He added: "I'd like to thank the supporters who made the journey, because they still supported us throughout and we really appreciate their effort."

Heathens aim to get their top four bid back on track in Kent on September 5.

Robins caught out by bizarre leveller

Dudley Town 1 Wellington Town 1 DUDLEY Town got a good point against Wellington, who were second in the table at the start of play, and but for a bizarre equaliser it could have been more.

In a poor game played in a swirling wind with few chances for either side, Town took the lead on 59 minutes when Lee Smith threaded the ball for Shaun Devonport to slot home.

On 78 minutes stand-in Dudley goalkeeper Andy Arnold attempted to throw the ball to a defender but it hit him on his back and rebounded to Paul Jones who squared it to Aaron Morlian to score easily.

The Chronicle, a Midlands News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Katley, Telford, Thursday, August 25, 2016

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DK BEAT THE SLIPPERY SILS

DK 29 Silhillians 12

DK scored six tries and conceded two against Silhillians at Heathbrook in what proved to be an entertaining game despite heavy rain.

There were problems with ball retention for both sides in slippery conditions but it was also a game in which players were looking to impress.

DK opened the scoring with a try from Joe Tighe, who has impressed on the flank in both games so far. Duncan Tompkins added the extras, 7-0 to DK.

Sils were under territorial pressure and it stretched the defence with DK's second try again a team try with ball retention in the ruck and maul and then shipped wide when passing saw Luke Greenwood put through for the second try. Again Duncan T added the extras, 14-0.

Just before half time, Silhillians were back in the game after having driven up the field towards the DK 22 where a ruck was formed. Danny Hawkins was penalised for going in at the side and Sils took a quick penalty before the DK defence could organise and were over for a try under the posts. With the easy kick it was 14-7 going into half time.

DK secured the game within the third quarter with two tries from prop Arran Hudson, carbon copies of each other - a penalty into the corner, a line out win and a well set up driving maul with Arran coming up with the ball on both occasions.

With the score now 24-7 the conditions started to influence the game with both sides making errors and moves frequently breaking down.

To their credit the next score went to Sils when they were able to give their right wing the chance to finish a good backs move to make it 24-12.

DK then started to take back command of the game and finished when they were able to get their phase play working. Mitch Greally breached the defence and suddenly Danny Hawkins was there for the final try 29-12.

The scoring was completed when George Ingram slotted a long conversion from a difficult angle, 31-12 the final score.

On Saturday Bridgnorth visit Heathbrook with the kick off at 2.30pm.

Dressage triumph for Sophie



Brierley Hill's Sophie Holder in action at SEIB Trailblazers Championships held at Stoneleigh Park

A YOUNG rider from Brierley Hill has become the 2016 Dodson & Horrell Junior Intro Dressage Champion at Stoneleigh Park in Warwickshire.

Sophie Holder was taking part in the SEIB Trailblazers Championships, an equestrian extravaganza that is the culmination of hard work put in by amateur riders who have qualified through two rounds of competition throughout the UK.

This was Sophie Holder's third trip to the Championships. She first attended in 2012, contesting the Junior Preliminary division with her 13.2hh pony, and came again in 2015 with her other horse, a 16.2hh Dutch Warm-

blood with whom she has since affiliated with British Dressage.

Her mount this year was Torthorwald Julius, a six-year-old Arab gelding. Julius was brought into work late, and Sophie is working hard to solidify his education as a dressage horse.

After his Trailblazers success, she hopes to affiliate Julius and see how far he can progress. Then, she will sell him on to fund her next young horse.

"I'll definitely be back for another Trailblazers Championships with another horse," said Sophie, who balances her studies with working for dressage rider Sue Brennan during the school holidays.

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